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GENERACION SUICIDA TOUR DIARY

ULTRA THE CAVEMEN

CLEVELAND SCENE REPORT

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TOP TENS

Some of our contributors' top ten (or so) things we've reviewed this month. For review consideration, send two copies of vinyl, or one copy of CD-only or demo releases to our PO Box. We review independent punk, garage, and hardcore releases—no major labels!

GRACE AMBROSE

Y PANTS – Beat it Down LP + 12"
MIDNITE SNAXX – Chew On This LP
QUESTION – LP
WARM BODIES – Domo EP
S-21 – Year Zero EP
V/A – Do You Wanna Be A Punk Rocker? EP
BB EYE – EP
NOSFERATU – Sounds of Hardcore EP
PIERRE & BASTIEN – LP
PRIESTS – live

MATT BADENHOP

QUESTION – LP
VIVISEKTIO – Ydintalvi EP
OI POLLOI – Saorsa LP
LEVITATIONS – CS
MIDNITE SNAXXX – Chew on This LP
PIERRE & BASTIEN – LP
SOFT CHEEK – EP
RETRASERES – LP
THE PROLETARIAT – Soma Holiday LP
ROMANTIČNE BOJE – LP

ARIELLE BURGDORF

CENTURY PALM – Meet You LP
THE BELLICOSE MINDS – LP
MIDNITE SNAXX – Chew On This LP
CAREER SUICIDE – LP
KARBÖNITE – live
S-21 – Year Zero EP
HAISTELIJAT – Pientä Kohoumaa EP
FRENCH VANILLA – live
NOSFERATU – Sounds of Hardcore EP
BLEEDING GUMS – II EP

MITCH CARDWELL

MIDNIGHT MINES –LP
MIDNITE SNAXXX – Chew on This LP
URANIUM CLUB – 12"
V/A – Do You Wanna Be A Punk Rocker? EP
WARM BODIES – Domo EP
LUMPY RECORDS – all EPs
CHROME REVERSE – LP
BAD BAD – LP
THE PROLETARIAT – Soma Holiday LP
PAT TODD – 2xLP

ROBERT COLLINS

Making lemonade on the road... or something....

LAYLA GIBBON

Y PANTS – Beat it Down LP + 12"
BB EYE – EP
TYVEK – live
PIERRE & BASTIEN – LP
MIDNIGHT MINES – LP
MIDNITE SNAXXX – Chew on This LP
WARM BODIES – Domo EP
NOTS / THE WORLD– live
UV-TV – Glass LP / THE WAD – EP
S-21 – Year Zero EP

DAN GOETZ

BLEEDING GUMS – II EP
UV-TV – Glass LP
NOSFERATU – Sounds of Hardcore EP
CAREER SUICIDE – LP
WARM BODIES – Domo EP
SOFT CHEEK – EP
S-21 – Year Zero EP
LOST SYSTEM – EP
QUESTION – LP
HAISTELIJAT – Pientä Kokoumaa EP

GREG HARVESTER

- OI POLLOI – Saorsa LP
- BIZNAGA – LP
- POOR FORM – CS
- URANIUM CLUB – 12"
- V/A – Do You Wanna Be A Punk Rocker? EP
- LATE BLOOM – CS
- SOFT CHEEK – EP
- WARM BODIES – Domo EP
- THE WAD – Benny's Business EP
- Y PANTS – Beat it Down LP + 12"

KENNY KAOS

- CAPITLE – Greatest Hits Vol. 1 EP
- JULIET SEIZURE – LP
- NIP DRIVERS – "Fox on the Run" 45
- FLEAS – Heart Breaker EP
- THE JERKS / STANDARD UNION – EP
- THE MUSCATS – Muscat Radio EP
- MIDNITE SNAXXX – Chew On This LP
- THE PUKES – LP
- STANDARD UNION – LP

CAROLYN KEDDY

- CHROME REVERSE – LP
- MARY BELL – LP
- MIDNITE SNAXXX – Chew On This LP
- THEE COMMONS – "Demolición" 45
- LÊ ALMEIDA – LP
- MIDNIGHT MINES – LP
- FLEAS – Heart Breaker EP
- PIERRE & BASTIEN – LP
- WARM BODIES – Domo EP
- DERV GORDON / NOTS – live

RAY LUJAN

- BITTER GROUNDS – Hollowlands CD
- BLANK SPOTS – LP
- BOMBPOPS – CD
- CHROME REVERSE – LP
- JULIET SEIZURE – LP
- MARY BELL – LP
- MIDNITE SNAXX – Chew On This LP
- POISON RITES – LP
- PAT TODD – 2xLP
- UV-TV – Glass LP
- DICKIES / DERV GORDON – live

MARISSA MAGIC

- Y PANTS – Beat it Down LP + 12"
- BB EYE – EP
- WARM BODIES – Domo EP
- HARTLEY C. WHITE – LP
- SOFT CHEEK – EP
- FRENCH VANILLA – live
- MIDNIGHT MINES – LP
- THE WAD – Benny's Business EP
- LOST SYSTEM – EP
- CEREAL KILLER – Demos EP

ROTTEN RON READY

- V/A – Do You Wanna Be A Punk Rocker? EP
- BB EYE – EP
- SOFT CHEEK – EP
- S-21 – Year Zero EP
- BRODY'S MILITIA – EP
- MUFF DIVERS – No Muff Too Tuff EP
- NOSFERATU – Sounds of Hardcore EP
- CONCEALED BLADE – LP
- POISON RITES – LP
- MIDNITE SNAXX – Chew On This LP

FRED SCHRUNK

- MIDNITE SNAXX – Chew On This LP
- WARM BODIES – Domo EP
- S-21 – Year Zero EP
- URANIUM CLUB – 12"
- QUESTION – LP
- MUFF DIVERS – No Muff Too Tuff EP
- CEREAL KILLER – Demos EP
- BB EYE – EP EP
- UV-TV – Glass LP
- BIZNAGA – LP

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- SOFT CHEEK – EP
- MIDNITE SNAXXX – Chew on This LP
- LAST DAYS – Torn in Two Parts EP
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- COLD INSTITUTION – LP
- CENTURY PALM – Meet You LP
- VIVISEKTIO – Ydintalvi EP
- BAD BAD – LP
- Y PANTS – 12"

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This is a contributor-driven magazine. We need help writing reviews, editing, doing layouts, processing mail, maintaining our archive, and more. Write to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com to get involved.

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Below is a list of some of the many non-US distributors that currently carry *MRR*. We do our best to cover as much territory outside of the US that we can, but we still want to distribute to more parts of the world.

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Occult Whispers Records

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Night Voices Volume 1
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LETTERS

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Letters may be edited for length. Response not guaranteed.

A Statement About Oi! Revival and the Glorification of Oi! Music in Punk Circles

Well, some of you may think it's pompous to say it's a "statement," but I don't fuckin' care, I think that sometimes punx have some problems to take a stand. I don't want to sound like I'm pretending to be above the crowd or anything and I don't want to be the finger pointing kind of person, but this thing drives me mad. To begin with, my name is Numa. I'm involved in various bands in Brittany, in western France, including Litovsk. We cover Camera Silens and Blitz, so we're not total strangers to the Oi! revival and we have some kind of responsibility in that phenomena. Mind you, this is *my* opinion and not the whole band's opinion; I only speak for myself here.

I hate when a type of music is hyped but yeah, sometimes it creates good stuff and some great bands are created so why not...But *for fuck's sake*, how can some bloody Rock Against Communism, some fascist or racist bands, be accepted and listened to by political punx? Why is it somehow acceptable to have patriotic bands playing in anarchist places or being interviewed in zines, who seemed to be politically not inclined to patriotism? Why? Why? Why?

Now I'll explain myself. In the two last years I saw bands saying in *Maximum Rocknroll* (for example) or other media that they were influenced by COMBAT 84 or saying, "Yeah man, we love French Oi!, BRUTAL COMBAT, SNIX, blah blah blah blah fucking blah," and it was totally legit to say that here (well, I ask myself the question!). Well, OK. People may not understand lyrics when it comes to French Oi! But sometimes to publish chronicles in a zine, it demands some research. When I saw a columnist in *MRR* saying something like, "Yeah, SKINKORPS were nationalist at some point, but dude, their album is a classic!" I wanted to fucking puke. When SYNDROME 81 played in sweden a young skin asked them, "Why don't you guys play some BRUTAL COMBAT?" "Coz it's a fucking nazi band!" "Yes, I know but they rock and they come from the same city!" What the fuck is happening? I saw also a chronicle of the YESTERDAY'S HEROES LP who are known in Colombia for beeing outright fuckin' nationalist bastards and who are known for vicious attacks on anarcho-punx and anti-fascist people there...I mean it's fucking wrong to hype these bands…It's fucking senseless. I mean, one of my friends was killed by a neo-nazi skinhead so seeing nazi or nationalist skinhead music going legit with *MRR* or punks worlwide is making me fucking sick! At least people will understand that?

Second point, since when is it trendy to like patriotism in political punk circles? I mean I like COCK SPARRER but fuck, I won't make them play at a gig in an anarchist place...I say that coz I don't understand why it's fucking cool to like RIXE and LION'S LAW (who share one member). I really don't care about them playing in venues like bars or other gig rooms, but in anarchist places ? Like K-Town fest or Gaztexes in Basque Country? I don't see the point...In a way I understand RIXE when they say in "Hexagone" that the situation is all fucked up and we're all in a mess, but at the end if their "heart still beats in France," we're not on the same side sorry... And don't try and say I am accusing them of beeing fascists or nazis coz ***they are not*** but you can be anti-racist and still be a patriot. I'll never be on the same side of French patriots coz I'll never be proud of this country which did so much shit in Africa and in every place we colonized. Even in the place I'm from, Brittany, the French government tried (and nearly succeeded!) in eradicating the Bretton language by force, therefore I'm not on the French patriotic side...And when their drummer does DIGITAL OCTOPUS, remixing some SKREWDRIVER, everyone seems to find it fucking funny. OK, I may not understand that humor or I may lack humor but there's no fucking way I'm gonna dance to that tune with hundreds of punx at punk festivals or gigs...

Last point for American politically dodgy skinheads who like CAMERA SILENS: they were a band with convictions and political lyrics. "Espoir Déçus" is a song about Spanish republican and anarchist refugees in france and their singer just came out of the dark, after twenty-eight years on the run from the police, after having commited a bank robbery with some Basque anarchists in the '80s.

And for all non French speaking punks and skins who like old French punk and Oi!, do some research before hyping a band or buying their t-shirts...I may sounded like a PC punk on that, but I don't really care, I just wanted to state some things and for the punks and skins who read this text to be aware of certain things...

Remember no one is perfect, we all fucked up and did shit at some point. I never said I was perfect, never said I didn't listen some shit bands, but there some things that need to be said.

Freedom, peace, unity.

—Numa

By definition this is a rebuttal, but I'm not interested in changing hearts and minds regarding Oi! Most of Numa's statement doesn't concern me: 1. I'm not an anarchist, 2. I don't live in France and 3. I don't care if a French anarchist lacks a sense of patriotism (duh)—so I'll keep opinions mercifully short.

The hype surrounding modern French Oi! is mutable. People get excited. But inevitably the tourists return home. Remember the first CRIMINAL DAMAGE LP? Big hit. Remember the third CRIM-DAM LP? Not so much. Anyway, the hype has moved onto Bovver-Boogie (aka Third Wave Pathetique).

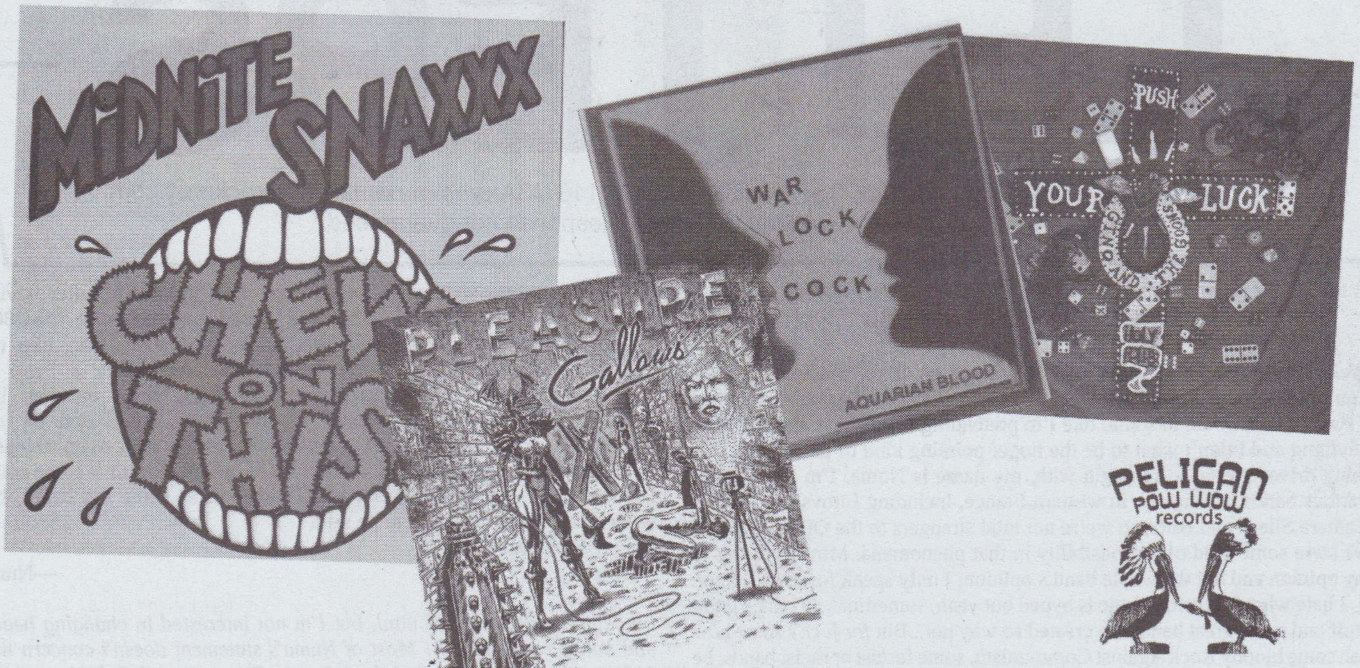
As for "nazi or nationalist skinhead music" being "legit" in MRR, *I'd disagree. Grace Ambrose (Big-Ed as she's known around Gang HQ) has afforded me a wide berth when it comes to my column content but she has held my heels to the fire regarding bands that are too flagrant about their right-wing leanings. And I have attempted to make her life easier by self-censoring bands I would struggle to paint as "acceptable." I have never reviewed a white power band in my column. SKINKORPS were not then and are not now a WP band (go look at their crummy Facebook page). They started as a band who opposed the left-wing punk status quo by embracing a perfunctory nationalist stance (like most Oi! bands). SKINKORPS was never a "Party band" such as LEGION 88 or BUNKER 84 was with the Front National. Their political activities amounted to a few "anti-red" songs and gang fights. But if a person's litmus test for enjoying an Oi! band is that one of their members robbed a bank with Basque anarchists then sadly SKINKORPS fail that test. What a high bar! But that doesn't deter me from listening to CAMERA SILENS. Most "politically dodgy skinheads" (sure, I'll wear that) couldn't care less about CAMERA SILENS being pink. A band's political proclivities are not my own. If I so disagree with a bands political leanings—real or perceived—that it makes me want to stop listening to them and start arguing about them I put on a different record. Ya dig? It's a thoroughly unrighteous solution but it puts the onus on me to change my surroundings.*

And is it truly trendy to be patriotic and punk in France? If so, the skins over there need to have a little chit-chat about division of labor. Being into punk and embracing the spirit of your country was one of the reasons skinheads came back. Patriotism is our thing! Like Choke sings, "Punks do nuthin', give us a bad name!" But really real, the topic of what does or does not fit the purview of punk is a boring and puerile exercise that makes me wish HitList *was still being published.*

I do enjoy discussing Oi! though (thanks MRR*!). And I'm glad Numa wrote in to share his gripes. See yinz later in the mag.*

—Turbo

This conversation has taken on a renewed relevance with the currently more-visible rise of the white supremacist right worldwide and its close ties with nationalist movements (in many cases, they are synonymous). **MRR** ***stands against nationalism, patriotism, and white supremacy. So should there be space for Oi! at all in these pages? Write us a letter.***



PELICAN POW WOW records

It is a normal occurrence in the course of life that people fuck up. From its inception, Pelican Pow Wow Records was meant to promote punk and rock n roll, with a focus on New Orleans and Gulf Coast bands. Combining iconic elements that I loved about New Orleans (pelicans and Mardi Gras Indians) made sense at the time. But, I fucked up. People have said that our logo is appropriative and offensive. It no longer makes sense to continue using a name and logo when I cannot defend them, in good conscience, against such claims. If you were offended, I am truly sorry.

It is also hard to justify producing petroleum based products for entertainment purposes, when oil wars rage on and most people want their music digitally streaming anyway. But, I still think there is a valuable place in the world for physical media. And, I still feel strongly comitted to promoting bands who are making music that makes life more worth living.

So, please wish goodnight and goodbye to PPW and say hello to

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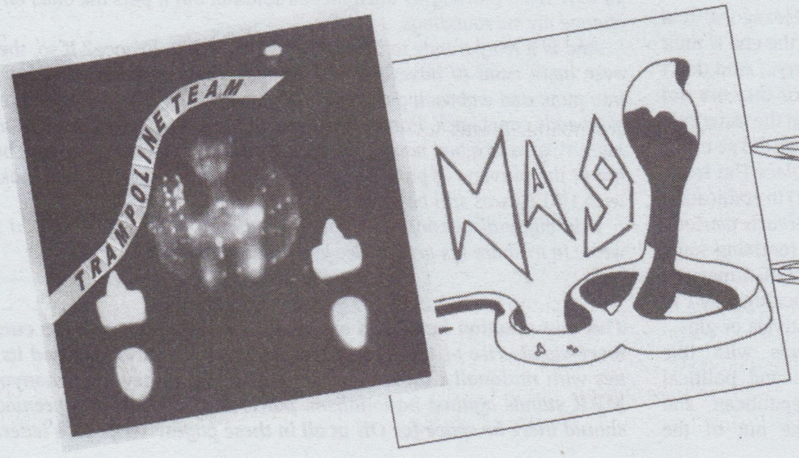

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COLUMNS

When I was first getting into metal, the lyrics were one of the most appealing parts of the genre. I'm not talking about the songs dealing with gruesome acts of violence, but rather the ones about real people. When discussing metal lyrics, many people will touch on the problematic elements (such as blatant misogyny and homophobia), the horror themes, or the psychological investigations. I didn't want anything to do with that. I was an angsty teenager, looking to find my own place in the world and my own way to express myself. I wanted nothing to do with the lifestyles of my family and all their friends. So, continuing a trend among a lot of middle and high schoolers, I turned to metal bands and lyrics for sources of power and inspiration as well as an outlet for my emotions. At their best, metal lyrics can be cathartic and powerful descriptions of defiance in the face of hegemonic systems, which is exactly what I needed as an atheist teen growing up in a strongly authoritarian fundamentalist Christian household. At worst…well…at worst there's nu-metal lyrics. But I digress.

In particular I was enamored with Metallica. James Hetfield has written his fair share of truly awful lyrics (especially as they got more and more famous), but in the early years of the band, his words are incredible statements about the human spirit. Their songs are musically well-written, sure, but I don't think they would have become such a popular band if they had written solely about horror or the supernatural. One of the strongest examples of the lyrics carrying the weight of a Metallica song is on their 1984 album *Ride The Lightning*. Many people, including the band themselves, deride "Escape" as the only weak moment on that record, but lyrically it remains one of their most relatable songs. The lines from its chorus can be made relevant to anybody's life: *"No need to hear the things that they say / Life's for my own to live my own way."*

I found myself revisiting this song after having a negative experience with the Tallahassee incarnation of the national Women's March that happened in January. Due to the strong likelihood of extreme weather conditions, the organizers of the march made the unpopular decision to reroute the parade from the original endpoint of the state capitol to a large building at Florida Agricultural & Mechanical University. This change was made due to liability and safety concerns; instead of marching for over an hour in a massive storm, the march would now take less than twenty minutes. It was a thoughtful compromise yet many people were publicly calling the organizers inept for making this change. Two of my friends were among those who were organizing the event and seeing that they were overwhelmed with negative responses, I decided to help them out and encourage people to follow the new plans. One person made a great point about how it was upsetting that the new route would not be as visible, which she viewed as paramount to its success. She correctly stated that marches like the Women's March can help viewers feel empowered and capable of standing up for their own rights. In my response to her, I agreed with her, and briefly wrote about my background and how important it was to me to discover radical politics and the LGBTQ+ community despite the efforts of my family to keep them away from me. But I also argued that participants can feel just as empowered by marching and then use the feelings of solidarity in their hometowns to work towards creating a meaningful and beneficial change in their lives. Pretty positive, no? Unfortunately, it also led to someone telling me that I had no place to talk like that, nor did I have a place in the march itself given that I am not a "real" woman. I won't go into further details about that response, but the way that she wrote to me was extremely dehumanizing. It was my first experience with genuine transphobia and it left me sick to my stomach. That's when I also knew that I had to go to the march. I had to do it in order to spite her.

Driving to the march, I was instinctively drawn to put on *Ride The Lightning*, and in particular "Escape." I found myself half shouting and half crying along to the first verse: *"Feel no pain but my life ain't easy / I know I'm my best friend / No one cares but I'm so much stronger / I'll fight until the end."* And fought I did. Lost in a sea of pussy hats, surrounded by people who probably would not call me a woman, I marched with those words echoing in my mind. I was proud to be there at the march, but I don't think I could have attended if I didn't have the fiercely positive affirmation from James Hetfield.

Now that I'm done sharing my feelings with you all, here's some great metal releases that have come out recently:

CARNAGE – *34°23"41'N 132°27"17'E* CS (self-released): I first heard of this band mostly by accident—I saw that there was a new release on bandcamp from "CARNAGE" and I immediately (and erroneously!!) assumed it was one of the well-known CARNAGEs out there. This is a new CARNAGE, and they are from Portugal. When I saw that they listed their influences as classic British crust punk, I knew that this would be up my alley. I've been obsessing with bands like SACRILEGE and the ENGLISH DOGS lately, so I was thrilled to hear another band that would carry on with this sound. Don't expect any speedy thrash ragers though—these songs are mostly mid-tempo with a lot of emphasis on riffs. The best comparison for their sound doesn't come from England, but rather from the more crusty direction that DARKTHRONE has been pursuing for the last several years. If you close your eyes and listen, some of these sound like homages to NOCTURNO CULTO's riffs. And just like DARKTHRONE, sometimes this demo is a little repetitive, but for the most part this is fun and worth your time.

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DEATH WORSHIP – *Extermination Mass* EP (Nuclear War Now! Productions): Holy shit! After what feels like for fucking ever, there's a new damn record out from R. Forster AKA Deathlord of Abomination and War Apocalypse from CONQUEROR (and currently of BLASPHEMY). I'm a huge fangirl of the Ross Bay Cult scene, so much so that I will willingly listen to almost any band that tries to rip off their general sound. But this… this is the real deal. Who else could get *the* Nocturnal Grave Desecrator and Black Winds from BLASPHEMY to guest on their album? Yes, that's right. In a way, this is almost a CONQUEROR reunion, since their drummer J. Read (now of the incredible REVENGE)

is the only other musician featured on every track. But unlike CONQUEROR, this is entirely R. Forster's trip through hell. Each of the six tracks is heavy, heavy, heavy with an overwhelming amount of deep, roaring guitars and gnarly blastbeats. If you like war metal, or you want to check out the sorts of directions that black metal can go in, pick this fucker up. Believe it or not, this is better than CONQUEROR. But if you haven't heard much extreme metal, give BEHERIT or early SODOM a listen before you listen to this.

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THE OMINOUS CIRCLE – *Appalling Ascension* 2xLP (20 Buck Spin): Is there a portal to hell in Portugal? If not, the OMINOUS CIRCLE are certainly working on creating their own. *Appalling Ascension* is their first release so far, but it easily sounds like the work of an accomplished, long-running band. The OMINOUS CIRCLE play a kind of death metal that has been increasingly popular in the last several years, nicknamed "caverncore" or "caverndeath." Silly nickname aside, this subgenre is mostly named for the sort of atmospheric and deep sounds that the bands have. Every time you see that nickname, please think to yourself "inspired by INCANTATION." Just like INCANTATION and the bands that have followed in their footsteps (such as PORTAL, IRKALLIAN ORACLE, or GRAVE MIASMA), the band is very low-end heavy, with very detuned guitars almost constantly tremolo picking individual notes. This gives it the "cavernous" feeling. I'm afraid that I have made this style and this album sound samey and uninteresting—*Appalling Ascension* is actually one of the strongest releases I've heard in this particular style. The band goes from INCANTATION-style riffs to MORBID ANGEL sludgefests fairly often, and pretty much every single song has highly technical (and also fairly noisy) guitar solos in it. In other words, it rips fucking hard.

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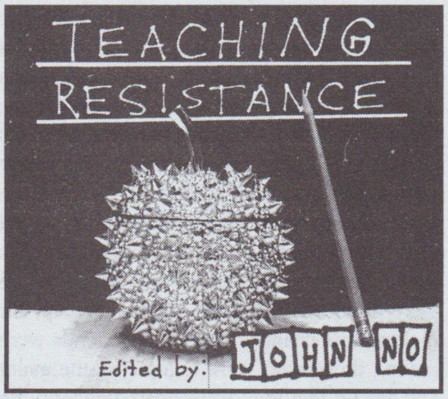
MISÞYRMING / SINMARA – split 10" (Terratur Possessions): When discussing the genre, critics tend to lump black metal bands together based on the region that they're from. Sometimes it doesn't make much sense at all (i.e. lumping all of American black metal into "USBM"), but other times a region has a distinct and tightly formed sound. This can be said of Iceland, and this split between two of their best black metal bands is representative of it. It's easy to talk about Iceland's black metal scene as one body of work for two reasons. For one, many of the Icelandic black metal bands share members, and secondly, most of the bands there are influenced by the same band: the fairly dissonant French group DEATHSPELL OMEGA. This split is a continuation in these bands' exploration in dissonance. Both tracks on are powerful—MISÞYRMING's song features what almost sounds like breakdowns (!?!?), whereas the SINMARA track sounds like lightning streaking across a deep red sky. At one song each, this split EP leaves me desperately wanting more. Check this one out if you haven't heard any Icelandic black metal before and you want to explore their sound.

Please send demos, questions, and comments to deathpoemrecs@gmail.com.



Miles of ink have been spilled debating and dissecting the fabled school-to-prison pipeline, a problem endemic to the U.S. education system that almost exclusively affects its most socioeconomically disadvantaged students, students for whom realistic options for survival and resistance were always slim and high-risk. Less commonly discussed, however, are what options exist for these students' educational attainment following their likely incarceration at the hands of an oppressive capitalist state—and what options for survival and resistance remain in this most-restrictive of environments. This month's column features some powerful reflections from Lena Tahmassian, a PhD researcher and teacher living in Oakland, CA, and a perennial MRR *reader as well as contributor in more recent years. Her column focuses on the importance of not-for-profit prison higher education and solidarity in the post-reason era. Lena can be reached at lena.tahmassian@gmail.com.*

On February 1, 2017 inmates took over a wing of the Vaughn Prison in Delaware, protesting Trump and demanding better conditions and "remedies conducive to reform and rehabilitation" with education at the top of their list. A guard who was taken hostage died and there is now, at the time of writing, a civil rights coalition asking for a transparent federal investigation. Little more than that information was made known to the public. While most prisons are public institutions, there is not much common knowledge about what goes on in them. Whether or not there will be a further degradation of prison conditions under Trump (there could easily be), this act holds symbolic weight: members of the most marginalized group in society (most can't even vote) protest an administration that will more than ever place private profit over people, an administration that has already made explicit that various (disproportionately nonwhite) sectors of the population are essentially disposable.

Returning to the prisoners' demands, this column is in defense of not-for-profit higher education in prisons, not only because I believe that people are not disposable, but also that teaching and learning go both ways. My higher education teaching experience to date has been split between graduate student teaching at an elite university and volunteer teaching for the accredited college program at San Quentin State Prison. I got involved in the latter because there was a need for my particular skills, I wanted to do something less self-serving than just getting a PhD, and to expand my teaching skills. In general, I was up for the challenge of teaching people whose experiences would mostly be very different from my own.

While I've taught in two radically different learning environments, my basic objectives are fundamentally the same: to teach them to create meaning out of texts and to critically think and rethink the basis of knowledge production. One notable difference of prison higher education, other than the technological lack (only pen and paper are available), is that when your everyday reality is the very definition of confinement, the classroom acquires a new liberating dimension. Students are eager to speak and share their experiences, and the classroom is, unlike their cellblocks, racially integrated. For us as instructors, being a volunteer in a free program is also in itself liberating (provided you can make time for it). This dynamic does seem to partially inform the students' attitudes which shift more towards "Thanks for teaching us!" rather than the "Hey, I'm paying for this!" vibe of the increasingly neoliberal academy. That said, I've had many considerate and inquisitive students at the traditional university, but some do treat education like a product to be consumed. I suppose in defense of the student-as-consumer mindset (from their perspective), one must recognize that the astronomical cost of higher education and the fact that many students will be indebted into the foreseeable future places increasing pressure on them to see learning as a serious financial investment on which they must see a return.

In my experience, incarcerated students tend to ask "is this how they do things at… (Stanford, Berkeley, etc.)?" They want to

know that they are being challenged and not patronized. It's also a good practice for me to always question and reflect on my methods by having to explain why we assess learning a certain way. I've come to believe strongly however that it's not just about importing and adapting methodologies from the elite academy for those who in many cases were never afforded the opportunity of higher education, but that prisoners also have a lot to teach us. Bringing all of their diverse life experiences to the table opens up new possibilities for discussion. Also, many of us tend to slide through life avoiding our problems, burying our traumas, making the same mistakes, and never facing our insecurities head on. For those seeking rehabilitation, self-reflection is unavoidable and often involves identifying and extirpating the markers of toxic masculinity. I've seen how the various programs offered, including college education, help develop self-awareness, discipline, resolve, and a spirit of cooperation that I have not seen anywhere else. For prisoners it can be a matter of life or existential death. Those who go through the rehabilitation process have accomplished the very difficult task of confronting their issues head on and facing those whose lives they have potentially damaged. To thrive within the walls for the time being, you have to be able to imagine something better beyond them. Perhaps this is something we can all learn from.

Upon advocating for prison higher education, I know that on ethical grounds maybe I am mostly preaching to the choir in this column. But for the naysayers (maybe they'll be at your next family function), it also makes a lot of sense from a utilitarian standpoint. Even though most of us don't have much of a clue what goes on in prisons, we nevertheless fund them through our taxes. Like it or not, most prisoners are eventually released, and access to education while incarcerated dramatically decreases the rate of recidivism. Yes, there are dangerous people who are probably incapable of not harming others—those who fit this profile are not typically eligible for rehabilitation programs in the first place.

Thus higher education in prison is good for both prisoners *and* society, and those who initiated the Vaughn prison uprising surely knew that. But the current rise of corporate fascism is indeed a double whammy, as it seeks to designate enemies of the state *and* profit off of their subjugation, which can take the form of public prison labor and private prison contracts, border walls, armaments, etc. Now more than ever, electoral political discourse is beyond logic and reason, with no longer even a semblance of concern for others (unless you're white and poor, then there is just a semblance of concern for you, but seriously, wake up people: those industrial jobs are not coming back and its not brown people's fault).

However, on a positive note, there is a whole new generation of resistance cropping up who is questioning what they've been told about who the "bad guys" are in the first place. The consensus has fallen out. Let's hope that sliding back to corporate liberalism is not the best we can do. Specifically, on the topic of issues that impact incarcerated people directly: last year Obama did bring back Pell Grants for prisoners for the first time since 1994 when Bill Clinton pulled the plug on all federal funding for prison higher education by signing the Violent Crime Bill, which was actually written by the then-senator Joe Biden. The Democrats of old may have reversed their stance on that disastrous bill, but the damage is surely done. Also, I can't say for sure, but my best guess is that Pell Grants for prisoners will be going away again. (Is the incoming Education Secretary seriously a semi-illiterate billionaire and advocate of for-profit education and arming schoolchildren?)

These days, a lot of people seem to be asking a variation of the question: "What is our responsibility to people we disagree with?" ("Is it OK to punch a Nazi?") I don't claim to have all the answers (Yes, it's OK to punch a Nazi). I think there's actually a simple formula for this: if your worldview is defined by exclusion and denying people's humanity, then you're actually the one shutting down the possibility for discussion. Aside from the more extreme examples (unfortunately, I think they'll be increasing), should we try to change people's minds? We need to build our resistance, but is there a tool to measure the distance between our ideas, to determine when it's no longer worth our breath? I think teachers are in a privileged position to promote dialogue, expand minds, and also build empathy bridges in the classroom, but also way beyond. A lot of the students share my worldviews, many don't. In light of the current reality, I'm all for increasing the possibility of encounters with people you would probably otherwise never engage with. Sometimes I feel like our social media echo chambers will be the death of us. I'll carry on contemplating the limits of our responsibility.

On a final note, I highly encourage grad students, graduate degree holders, and faculty to get involved with prison higher education in your area. There are also organizations that take book donations to send to incarcerated people—I've met inmates who have accessed important literature this way! If you live in the Bay Area, I can point you in the right direction. You will talk to a lot of interesting people, learn about the prison system, and subsequently become a prison abolitionist or at least an advocate for the humanity of those who deserve a second chance, or even an actual first chance at a decent life. Compounded by the fact that American reality is now producing marginality at a rapid rate, it has been reassuring to hear the marginal voices growing louder and more plentiful in the last weeks. We must continue to also defend the basic rights of those who have no voice at all.

The Teaching Resistance column is designed to provide a platform for radical, subversive teachers / educators to share their ideas and draw attention to important issues around education; particularly compulsory- and community-based education. If you are a teacher (anywhere in the world) for students of primary or secondary school ages (K-12), community colleges, or alternative learning arrangements such as collectivist free schools, and you want to submit an idea for a column, please write an email to teachingresistance@gmail.com. There is also an archive for this column, which can be found online at teachingresistancearchive.blogspot.com.

Writing this column every month is becoming more and more of a challenge when the list of legitimately awful things with serious societal repercussions (at least for everyone who isn't in a position of privilege or power) gets longer with each passing day. Muslims are being unlawfully detained at airports and banned from entering the country, a wave of deportations are a real and tangible threat, our political leaders are supporting the erasure of Jews from the historical narrative of the Holocaust, environmental regulations are being systematically dismantled while scientists are stonewalled and silenced, reproductive rights are being targeted, and we have literal white supremacists controlling our government in the United States, but c'mon, let me tell you all about some limited-run punk records that came out recently!

At the same time, I think there is a very important place for the creative efforts of

our larger underground community to help support everyday acts of subversion and resistance. My band spent the weekend of the presidential inauguration playing our friends MALL CASTE's last two shows in some smaller cities that were a quick drive from Portland, but relatively off-the-beaten-path when it comes to the usual Pacific Northwest tour circuit. The plans were made before those specific dates had taken on any real significance, and it was a really strange situation to navigate—encouraging people to "get to the gig" seems kind of self-important when everyone is in the midst of so much deserved anger and mourning and protest. After we got back to Portland, I started mentally processing everything, thinking about how I had just played a bunch of punk songs about alienation and distorted realities in a coffee shop in Corvallis, Oregon (a place I'd previously only ever spent maybe an hour tops) with people who I care about and who have always had my back, how other people had chosen to be present and together in that space at that specific point in time, and the conversations that we had about the potential to foster more connections and collaborations with the new friends we had just met in a thriving and tight-knit DIY scene not too far from our own, and how all of that was, at least in a small way, inherently a rejection of so much of what is currently polluting the greater cultural mainstream. Things are really fucked, but we can (and *should*) collectively use it as an opportunity to be more intentional in supporting the people and groups who have the most to lose right now, which in an explicitly "punk" context could mean something as concrete as organizing benefit shows for truly radical causes, or something more comparatively abstract like making a better effort to book bills that aren't just made up of straight, white, cis men. Should be common sense, but just in case y'all need a reminder...

A few records that I've been particularly taken with lately, since that's what I'm actually here to talk about: Australia is more or less ground zero these days when it comes to producing bands with obvious debts to the FALL (seriously, have you heard that SHIFTERS single from last year yet?), with the new two-song 7" from EXILES FROM CLOWNTOWN only supporting the theory that some copies of *Hex Enduction Hour* must currently be in heavy circulation Down Under. The EXILES have been kneeling at the altar of Mark E. Smith for longer than most of their peers, though—they've been around since at least 2009, quietly putting out a record every couple of years in a stark contrast to the the prolificity of Mr. Smith and company in their prime. For this one, A-side "Oh Well" mines a sparse post-punk drone spiked with dour monotone vocals and trebly guitar for over five minutes, drawing from the FALL at their most nihilistic (see "Smile" from *Perverted By Language* for one obvious reference point), but also the sprawling and frayed experimental noise conjured by the DEAD C and their late '80s / early '90s Xpressway Records cohort over in New Zealand. On the other side of the single, "Contradiction Dance" pares the FALL-isms down to a foundation of lyrics repeated nonchalantly over a lean rhythm of percolating bass and drums, cut with some truly fractured psychedelic organ to make everything just a little more unsettling. Totally wired. (Soft Abuse, softabuse.com)

RANK / XEROX were one of my favorite bands of the last decade or so, although I hadn't really seen or heard anything about them in the years since their killer 2011 LP on Make a Mess and had kind of figured that they were over and done by now. But (amazingly!) they're back, with a new four-song EP called *M.Y.T.H.* that bridges the sinister, frantic post-punk edge of their previous records and the more introspective and melancholy electronic-accented pop songs of guitarist / vocalist David West's RAT COLUMNS project. There are some synths in the picture this time around that are alternately new wave-leaning (on the title track) and nearly SCREAMERS-esque (the foreboding "Ingenue"), while "Zero Hour" strips everything to the sort of economical slash-and-burn that dozens of "dark punk" groups have been trying to nail since RANK / XEROX were last in the picture. Even if this is the last that we hear from them, they've gone out here with what is probably their best song yet. "Deletion" starts with a brief paranoid buzz of synth before locking into nearly six minutes of needling tension and gradual release, giving off echoes of the WIPERS's epic "Youth of America" if it were turned inside out. Most welcome surprise of this garbage year so far, for sure. (Adagio830, adagio830.de / rankxerox.bandcamp.com)

Snakes and Shapes is the latest LP from the very appropriately named Brisbane trio BENT, channeling the off-kilter sounds of the most warped and wonderful weirdos of the late '70s / early '80s DIY milieu without falling into the trap of becoming some paint-by-numbers throwback. Sure, there are some unsubtle parallels to the RAINCOATS that can be traced from the ramshackle, clattering rhythms and fervently chanted vocals on "Bad Beds" and "Semicircles," and the prickly scrape of songs like "Brick Brick" points to a certain debt owed to No Wave's femme faction—think UT, or if you really want to dig deep, Boston's super-underrated BOUND AND GAGGED. But the real threads ultimately connecting BENT to their post-punk antecedents are their untamed approach to sidestepping the most linear path from point A to point B and their skill in taking jigsaw parts that have no apparent way of fitting together and devising their own way of piecing them into a joyously askew whole. (Moontown, moontown.bandcamp.com)

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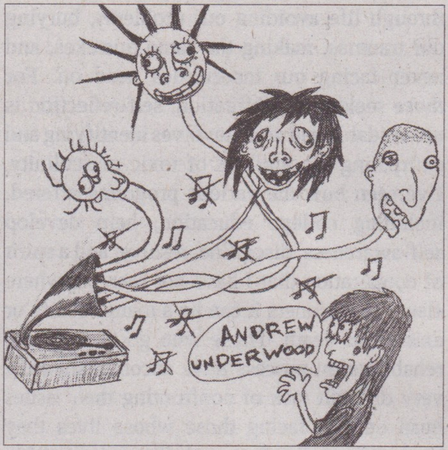


Right, so if you're reading this mag you are well aware that we here in the US are well fucked, and are rapidly making things worse for everyone else on the planet at the moment. Things are fucking bad and they're going to get a lot fucking worse before they get better (if they get better). I'm gonna break format a little bit this month and start out my column with a book recommendation for the the angry and dispirited. *Beating the Fascists: the Untold Story of Anti-Fascist Action* offers a chilling history lesson, documenting the rise of the hard-right in the UK, from the NF to the BNP (published in 2010, it pre-dates the rise of the UKIP) and the role that the toothless left played in allowing their unchecked rise to power. Perhaps more importantly it documents the efficacy of the direct actions carried out by those who had the courage, both physical and moral, to actually stand up to the far-right. It is beyond appalling that it's 2017 and the conversation is about "is it OK to punch a Nazi?" and not "how the fuck did we get to this point and how can we chase these fucking fascists back into the holes they crawled out of?" While American "progressives" mewl about Richard "Does human civilization really need the Black race?" Spencer's (yes, that's an actual quote) right to free speech, the white racist-dominated government of this country is ensuring that five-year-olds are being handcuffed and detained for the crime of being born in the wrong country. To quote punk (and Antifa) heros CONFLICT: *"This*

is not enough, stand up and fucking fight!" The time to react ha slong since passed, it's fucking time to stand up.

Ladies and gentlemen, DEFUSE are back! The legendary all-female crasher crust pioneers, who were contemporaries and frequent gig-mates of bands like COLLAPSE SOCIETY, DECEIVING SOCIETY and GLOOM reformed last year after a very long drummer-less hiatus, and while I'd seen them pop up on a few bills here and there, I never got my hopes up that we'd get a new recording to supplement their criminally small discography (two demo tapes, the split EP with POLIKARPA Y SUS VICIOSAS and one measly comp track), but here we are! Even more amazing, the new *Cry of Roar* EP showcases the band at the very top of their game, more than fifteen years removed from their last recording. The EP starts off with "Conflict," a short sharp blast of razor fuzz, galloping drums and throat-peeling vocals that will take you right back to the mid-'90s heyday of the "All Crusties..." era. "Cry of Roar" follows, a more developed but no less visceral attack with a memorable riff and truly unhinged shrieking backup vocals. The real surprise is the B-side-spanning "Silence," a mid-tempo epic that owes as much to KILLING JOKE (especially the almost-tribal drum breaks) as CHAOS UK, all of course buried under fuzz and held down by an implacable driving bass line. I listened to this fucker at least six times in the first twenty-four hours I had it in my hot little hands and if you love crasher crust (you better fucking love crasher crust!), you'll definitely do the same. This is fantastic on every level save the horrible pixelation of the record art, but that's hardly an issue when the contents are so very fucking crucial. Fortunately, this is on MCR and will thus have better than average worldwide distribution, which will in turn make it easier for you the reader to snap it up ASAP!

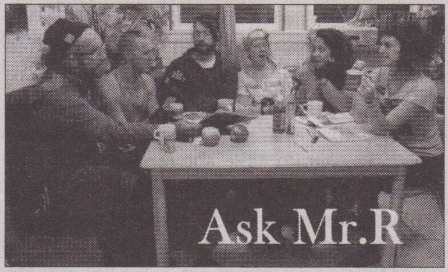
Any other time, the new CONTROL / EXIT HIPPIES split EP would have been the best news of the month, but here it is consigned to co-headliner status. What an embarrassment of riches this month has brought us! Not surprisingly, this record fucking rules. CONTROL show up doing what they do best: vicious, stripped-down CONFUSE-worship executed flawlessly. The perfectly ramshackle recording, the blown-out guitar fuzz, the venom-dripping vocals, the endless fills from the tin pan drums, the bold and melodic bass driving it all, everything here supports and enhances everything else. CONTROL are a group that have fully embraced obscurity, rarely performing live or releasing records, and that's a crying shame because they're a world-class band. EXIT HIPPIES, ceding the hardcore high ground to their split-mates, offer up one long track of noize-drenched techno-industrial chaos, only drifting into guitar-driven noisecore in the last 45 seconds of the piece. It's a perfect complement to the CONTROL side and a very pleasing re-affirmation that they are still down with the extreme experimentation that characterized their early work. Please note that the packaging for this record does not include any band names, or even the label name (it's on the massively unheralded and underrated Paank Levytlabel), so you'll have to keep an extra close eye out for it. This is an easy early candidate for the top ten of 2017.

Alright, that's enough challenging, confrontational hardcore for now. Let's crack a beer, turn off our brains and talk about the new BEERBELLY EP already! It's called *The Kids Just Wanna Pogo Dance,* and you definitely need to know that because they forgot to put the band name anywhere on the record. (I fucking love this band.) Yup, it's dumb. Uh-huh, it's fast (well, as fast as these goofballs can play anyway). Is it very much like their other records? You fuckin' bet, and that means it's well worth your worthless time and valuable beer money. "Pictures of Lily" is definitely the song of note on the EP, both for it's epic length (over two minutes!), relaxed tempo and straight up '77 punk feel. It's a good 'un. In the nightmare that the world has become, bands like BEERBELLY that offer up nothing but irresponsible fun and chaos are more valuable than ever before. *"Love beer, love pogo punk and hate work"*? Me fuckin' too.

There are three things to really love about the new Headnoise Hardcore compilation tape. The first is that it's a compilation tape, an awesome and seemingly long-forgotten format that allowed countless punx of the '80s relatively cheap and easy access to the best of hardcore from around the world. Second is that, in these trying times, any project that can bring together fifteen bands from across the globe is worth supporting. Third, and most important, the material is fuckin' great! The big "gets" here are the previously unreleased ABSÖLUT track (wow!) and two previously unheard PROXY tracks (double wow!) and a new LIFE track (triple wow!) but there's a ton of great stuff on this comp, much of it from Russian and Finnish bands that may be unfamiliar to most readers. Highlights include the furious, riff-heavy metallic d-beat of ANTIMELODIX, the incredibly catchy metal-punk of DUKE NUKEM and the furious, gritty straightforward hardcore of the female-fronted KOVAA RASVAA. This comp is a great, cost-effective way to check out some new tracks from old favorites and get into some unheralded bands that might have flown under your radar. Seriously, the LIFE track is worth the price of admission alone!

Finally, our friends as Desörden Records have offered up the CHARGED SS demo and it is, not surprisingly given how fucking amazing everything out of Mexico is these days, an absolute blazer. This is D-beat done absolutely correctly, raw and unpretentious, driven by frantic drumming and staggering riffs. The BPM is never that high but it feels fast as fuck, with every player in complete control but giving the impression of a car with no brakes barreling towards doom. The bleak, reverb-heavy vocals offer up a great deal of gravitas, a quality that many if not most modern D-beat bands sorely lack. If you're singing about war and death it's gotta fucking sound like you care and CHARGED SS leave no doubt that they do. Well-executed '80s throwback art completes an excellent package. Fantastic stuff from a band that I can't wait to hear more from.

Fuck it, that's it for now. See you all next month, when things will have somehow gotten even worse than they are right now, I'm sure. Write c/o *MRR* or email at agunderwood@gmail.com to commiserate.



I don't think anyone should take advice, but there are probably a lot of things for the punks to talk about, and we might as well do it here. Think of it more as an opinion *column though. (...and if we need a tagline for that I hope it can be something as vague as: "A column for people who are intrigued by subtle differences between the 'punks' and the 'punx.'")*

How is it that the Misfits are the worst band ever and also the best band ever? If you describe them they sound like a fetid turd, but they're so good! Everyone loves them even though you can prove mathematically that they're terrible.

They're iconic enough that people find them right out of the starting gate, and with not much to compare them to musically yet, they're catchy and accessible, they fit in perfectly with our whole early punk *love affair* thing. I always assumed that the Misfits's popularity just benefited from this place in a punk's early discovery timeline, when we're equipped with

a strong desire to identify with punk tradition, and then it becomes reliant on nostalgia and Hot Topic to fill in the gaps that maintain the standing for the next group. And it's really not *toootally* undeserved. Listening to the Misfits *feels like* when you thought it was your punk birthright to hang out in dingy warehouses that are covered in spray paint and you'd be skateboarding in there cause, I don't know, there's probably a ramp, and you have on a super cool jacket or something, and you would just pray that you would run into the state in a dark alley because you were ready to smash it so fucking hard, I swear to god. Like in the kind of places where the Foot Clan hangs out in the first Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles movie.

It's totally fair that you would love the Misfits from cradle to grave. It's a pretty common phenomena for a band to be stuck in this kind realm of confusion. It's also how a lot of people feel about the Ramones and the Dead Kennedys. Do we *haaave* to keep explaining everything? If your job isn't to review bands and music specifically, why do you gotta explain the Misfits to anybody? We all already know about them and that they're a staple and you either hold on or you don't, blah blah blah. Opinion debates are designed to be un-winnable, and I just can't trust anyone who claims they can prove their point mathematically, you know? It's not like you're trying to defend Henry Rollins as a person, so no big deal!

But I want to talk about "*feels like*" as welcome and valid truth experiences for our explanations with each other instead. For example, being allowed to love and experience a band as great when they're truly awful, i.e. "guilty pleasures" but minus the guilt; that scenario definitely counts as deserving a "*feels like*" pass, but, more importantly, so do experiences like "I don't know why, that person just makes me really uncomfortable," or "I know that the thing they said was pretty ambiguous, but…" or "I don't feel like that organization takes women seriously" or whatever else. Not to be confused with alternative facts / lies / prejudices that people have been trying to pass off as genuine, but the real ass things your friends don't know how to explain, but that they are experiencing as real. It's important to hear each other and offer to support our different viewpoints as much as it is to diss the crummy music they are into as a buddy bonding activity. Which, don't get me wrong, is a very fun thing to do, but right now more than ever when people are giving up so much of themselves everyday just paying attention and fighting and being threatened and stalked, let's just listen to each other without judgment and trust that what they're feeling is legitimate ass shit.

Still fighting, even when you're tired. All this strength is so impressive every single day. Thanks so much for everything you do. Send a text or call 510-585-HELP with all your questions, opinions, tips, and whatever else! Send in email form to askmrr@mail.com.

It seems like I have been mentioning George Orwell a lot in this column lately. Orwell is a great example of a person who used art to make a point about society whose body of work and views have endured far longer than any of his contemporaries. We use Orwellian just like we use Kafkaesque as an adjective. While many intellectuals were writing about the trend towards totalitarianism in Orwell's day, we remember none of them, but *1984* is back at the top of the bestseller list.

One thing I touched on last month is the Orwellian nature in which the white supremacist movement has managed to reinvent and legitimize itself under the new radical right wing regime. Yesterday's Neo-Nazi is now the innocuous White Nationalist. I am not sure where this term White Nationalist came from, but it is a blatant attempt to legitimize discredited terms such as Neo-Nazi or White Supremacist, just another example of the kind of newspeak currently up the flagpole along with "alternative facts." It's time to crank up the bullshit detector to eleven because it's coming hard and fast.

I talked to some people about last month's column and they felt I was being extreme, paranoid, and / or alarmist. First, let me say this: I was talking about the worst-case scenario, not the most likely scenario. Second, I spend a lot of time reading about the regimes of the 20th century, notably those of Stalin and Hitler, and I have a tendency to rely heavily on historic parallels in analysis. Let me use an amusing anecdote to make my point. When I was a toddler I used to watch my mother and grandmother bake cookies. Like most toddlers I liked cookies. So one day when my mom wasn't paying attention, I decided to make cookies. I dumped all the canisters of flour, sugar and the like from the kitchen counter onto a tray and put it in the oven. Then sat and watched. I of course succeeded only in making a huge mess until my mom came in and caught me. Our country today is like a toddler trying to bake cookies. We have all the ingredients for a fascist police state, and the will to create one by a sector of the population. But mixing all the ingredients correctly and getting the oven to the right temperature to recreate 1933 is unlikely. However, some of those ingredients might still come off the shelf and get mixed up creating a huge mess, with terrible results. I feel that the coming months will have many tests to see how far the drift to authoritarianism is going to take us. Also, there is still a chance to act to prevent things getting too far out of line.

Already the Muslim travel ban sets the precedent of isolating a minority group and placing emphasis on having "the right papers." I think this is an important psychological primer for the advent of a police state. I would pay close attention to what happens at the next protest that erupts over the killing of an unarmed Black man by police. Here in Minnesota, there have been two police killings recently, both of which resulted in protest. After the shooting of Jamar Clark, protestors were allowed to assemble and protest for some time, but their encampment outside a police station was eventually broken up. Still, few people were arrested or charged. However, some alt-right internet trolls did a drive by shooting on the protesters, wounding five.

After the shooting of Philando Castille, which made the national news, the police kept their distance. Protesters blocked the freeway and other major roads. Some were arrested, but I feel like the police were told to keep repressive measures in check rather than provoke more unrest and confrontation. Likewise, the many Dakota access pipeline protests have been fairly peaceful. It would be very telling if the next round of protests is met with major police repression and stiff charges against activists. This would be a clear signal that pressure is coming from above to stifle dissent.

We must remember that some of the biggest supporters for this, or any, regime that stresses law and order or authoritarianism are within the police, military, and intelligence services. Racial bias in policing has been under increased scrutiny lately. Personally, I don't think racial bias or violence has increased of late; more likely it has decreased since the 1960s and 70s. The difference is today the citizen can capture the truth on video and challenge the formerly unquestionable version presented by the police and courts. In theory this should empower citizens to place a check on untrammeled police power and arbitrary use of force. Instead, it challenges the role of the police in preserving public order and enforcing the status quo, that is to say "keeping the poor and minorities in line." This results in

a backlash from the police and their backers. Expect police and prosecutors to act with zeal if they get the green light to start using more repressive measures against protestors, especially those like Black Lives Matter who have been critical of their methods.

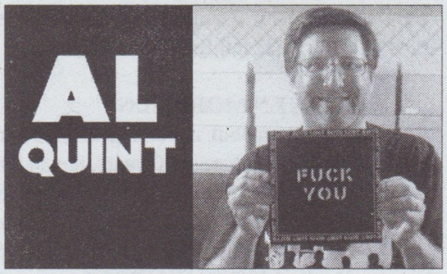
If we are perhaps, slowly headed to a fascist police state, what stands in the way? Active resistance, perhaps? Already protests by anarchist and anti-fascist groups have put a damper on the newly empowered radical right. It's my opinion, that this kind of active resistance is not only justified, it is a moral obligation. If more people had taken a stand against fascism in the '30s it would have never gotten off the ground. And the most effective way I can think of to prevent the radical right from moving to new extremes is to actively resist it.

When anti-fascist protests confront the radical right, there is always a chorus of condemnation under the rubric of free speech. I would note that the people who speak up most loudly for free speech when the Nazis are on campus, are rarely to be found when anti-war or civil rights protestors are being tear gassed and arrested.

This brings us back to 1977 and the Nazi March in Skokie, Illinois. The Illinois Nazis applied for a permit to hold a march in full Nazi regalia down the main Street of Skokie, a city with a large Jewish population, many of whom were Holocaust survivors. The city tried to deny their permit, and the ACLU famously sued to defend their right to free speech. Unpopular as it was at the time, this was the right thing to do. Historically, these repressive measures have mostly been used against the left, labor, and civil rights movements. It took the Nazi party marching to guarantee free speech for all groups outside the mainstream. A tradition has since emerged of Nazi and Klan groups marching with huge police escorts. In fact, when the Nazis marched in Skokie they were expected to face thousands of angry counterprotesters. Many brought baseball bats and motorcycle helmets and were ready to rumble. The Nazis chickened out and "relocated" their protest to the other side of town at the last minute. This episode was uproariously lampooned in the motion picture *Blues Brothers*.

The other case to remember is the so-called Greensboro Massacre of 1979, where Communist Workers Party and civil rights protesters were gunned down by Klansmen and Nazi party members with police collusion, resulting in five deaths and many wounded. This is where the slogan "cops and Klan, hand in hand" originated, as it was shown that many of the Klansmen and Nazis were either off-duty police or police informants. I would be especially alert for activity of this type where non-state actors are used to intimidate protesters. Indeed, in one of the accomplices in the drive-by shooting against Black Lives Matter protesters here was a suburban police officer, who has since been forced to resign.

Does the radical right have the right to free speech? Certainly. They also have the right to face the reaction for their provocative hate speech. When they advocate violence and extermination and give Nazi salutes, they have the right to answer for it in the kind of language they understand. The same methods they would use if the shoe was on the other foot. And I would note, the same methods their protectors in the police use on anti-war and civil rights protestors when they try to exercise the same free speech rights. Since the '70s most of the domestic terrorism and violence in America has come from the radical right. Some of these groups are very well armed and organized. Many have as their goal provoking a race war that will result in the ethnic cleansing of America. This fantasy comes largely from their cult tome *The Turner Diaries* which maps out their race war and was a direct inspiration to the Oklahoma City bombers. These groups are working their way into the mainstream and are over represented in the military and law enforcement. They have cleaned up their act from the Skinhead and Klan Robe days and are recruiting internet trolls to their cause at an alarming rate. Keep your eyes and ears open in the coming months to what goes on in your community and be ready to act and resist.



NO TREND—FOR THE FUN OF IT ALL

There are songs that have lyrics that roll around in your head like a mantra. NO TREND's "For The Fun Of It All," off their 1983 *Too Many Humans* album is one such track. The lyrics are a litany of what I suppose could be considered navel-gazing, pondering life's journeys, expressed in its most basic form—*"What do you do, when you don't want to be alive and you don't want to be dead…What do you do?...What do you do when you're growing old but you want to stay young? What do you do?...What do you do? When you don't know what to do?"* Minimalistic but saying so much, especially as I get older and, uh, ponder the meaning of life.

Ah, the getting old stuff—trying to stay relevant without coming across as some pathetic old guy. Still grappling with what you want to do with your life, when so many around you seem to have settled such things a long time ago. Or have they? Still, this column isn't really about me (thank god, right?), but that song was the inspiration to write about a band that doesn't always get as much mention as the "bigger names" of the era. The fact that their records have been out of print for decades, save for a posthumous release of their final album *More* might have something to do with that. And it's unlikely they'll be reissued anytime soon. In a thread on the Electrical Audio board, someone claims that Mentges "refuses to allow his early albums to be reissued, destroyed the master tapes, smashed all remaining copies of their albums, is a gun-toting conservative, and could give a rat's ass about his 'legacy.'" Mentges abandoned all musical pursuits following their demise and has rebuffed all interview requests.

NO TREND were nasty and acerbic. The band's original lineup drew heavily from FLIPPER and early PIL. A combination of loping basslines and barbed guitar that was one part Keith Levene, one part Ted Falconi, with mainly mid-paced, repetitive arrangements. It's a pretty easy comparison that just about everyone has used when discussing the band, but it's dead-on accurate. Some accused them of being a bit *too* derivative but, in some ways, it was more caustic than those bands. The axe-mangling from Frank Price (who sadly committed suicide in the late '80s) was the key to the band's sound (besides Mentges, of course). Hailing from Maryland, they were the anti-harDCore band. Steve Blush, who wrote *American Hardcore* and was the band's manager for a few years, said, "they hated everyone and everything, their grinding PIL / FLIPPER onslaught constituted a complete fuck you to DC scene conformity. When I met 'em, they were shoving flyers that read 'No Trend, No Scene, No Movement' up all the Georgetown Coke machines frequented by the straightedge types." That attitude was the basis for their demo track "Hanging Out In Georgetown," which appeared on their *Early Months* collection of a 1983 demo session and live recordings. And their approach was a counterpoint to the rigid loud-fast-rules aesthetic of the hardcore bands. The thing is they did have a fondness and respect for Dischord and Ian MacKaye, according to Buck Parr, who played in a later lineup of the band. But they liked fucking with the audience. In an interview with *Yellow Green Red* webzine in 2010, Parr said, "When they came out, they were unapologetic in playing music that went distinctly against the grain of what passed for punk rock at that time in DC. Also, they would

razz and bait audiences present a generally unpleasant vibe; they'd take pokes at punks while operating within the punk rock scene."

It wasn't just the DC hardcore crew that NO TREND aimed their barbs at, though. They reveled in being iconoclasts and provocateurs. Some people got it, some had a decidedly more negative reaction. The DC zine *Truly Needy* would have both positive and negative reviews in the same issue. One writer said, "To call them awful would be generous. I don't think they could have been any worse… as a joke, I did not find NO TREND funny and, as a band, they were offending without being interesting." Contrast that with another reviewer's laudatory description of NO TREND as one of Washington's more relevant bands. The review described Mentges as a combination of Don Rickles and Johnny Rotten and stated, "They are against anything that isn't real in human emotion. If it's not real, then it is to be made fun of."

That's the essence of NO TREND. They called 'em as they saw 'em, viciously lampooning all sorts of conformist behavior—sucking it up, fitting in, knowing your place, without taking the time to ponder the meaningless of it. Work, procreate, consume, die. Songs like "Kiss Ass To Your Peer Group," "Do As You're Told," and "Mindless Little Insects" expressed those sentiments in clipped, lyrical fragments.

I was a bit late to the party for my appreciation of NO TREND. I remember hearing "Teen Love," which got some college airplay on the local college stations—the track features Mentges basically reciting a narrative about two of the cool kids' doomed relationship, ending in a tragic car accident, never getting a chance to achieve their career dreams. That's over somber musical accompaniment, save a fifteen-second or so abrasive thrash burst in the middle. I became a fan in the mid-to-late '80s when I finally decided to spin the copy of *Too Many Humans* that had been sitting for a few years in the punk section of the record store I worked at. The cacophony and anarchistic spirit were immediately appealing, particularly the title track. Noisy, feedback-laden and, about 40 seconds in, Mentges starts to howl the song's three lines—*"too many FUCKING humans, you breed like rats, and you're no FUCKING better."* After having to deal with often-annoying customers, that was something that I and my coworkers felt! The tempo picks up into free-form atonality, then reverts back to the previous creepy-crawl. I used to work one evening shift a week and, when it was time to clear the store for closing, this record usually did the trick in short order. (I should mention that the wanton industrial clatter of the closing, twelve-minute suite on MINISTRY'S *Twitch* album did the job even more effectively). Of course, the record ended up in my collection and still gets a fair amount of play.

I mentioned that some people did get what they were about…but then NO TREND would do a 180 and try something different. Mentges cast off the members of the original lineup and then brought in a series of different musicians, expanding the lineup to include keyboards, horns and strings on subsequent recordings, including some done with Lydia Lunch. Instead of punk, it was funkier and jazzier. He was always fucking with people's conceptions and expectations right up to the end. Their final album *More*, originally rejected by their label at the time Touch and Go and finally released in 2001, features a seventeen-minute rock opera. It's quite a way from "Teen Love." Truth be told, they pretty much lose me after the releases with the original lineup (which also had a change in bassists and drummers during that time), save for the scathing "Two Minutes To Non-Existence," which has the punk bile of the OG lineup, adding squawking, abrasive sax. That can be found on the compilation *When Death Won't Solve Your Problem* which, of course, is out of print. That disc features a fair chunk of the band's early output, including the ferocious "Mass Sterilization From Venereal Disease," which originally appeared on the *Teen Love* EP.

It's a shame NO TREND's music isn't readily available. Unless you want to pay crazy money for the originals, you'll have to depend on often crappy-sounding downloads. That's a damned shame, because it's the ones who try to provoke people out of their complacency who encompass punk's true spirit. NO TREND fell into that category.

EVEN MORE FUN

When one hears about a band getting back together for the first time in 40 years, it usually sets off alarm bells. They're louder when the band had never recorded before. Well, you can silence those alarms because *Product of America* by the EXTERMINATORS is pretty good, for such a long-delayed debut. To make the story short, the band formed in Phoenix in 1977, contemporaries of the great (and also underrated) CONSUMERS but fell apart fairly quickly and members scattered into such units as the GERMS, BAGS, and FEEDERZ—drummer Don Bolles, who wrote the liner notes, was one of the members. Three of them return, with the late Rob Ritter replaced by Cris Kirkwood from the MEAT PUPPETS on bass. So what do you get from four guys in their late fifties? Some damned fine loud, rowdy punk. It may not have the rawness of '77 and some of the leads are on the metallic side, but the attitude remains intact. That comes out for songs like "I Hate You," "I Don't Give A Fuck" and "Bionic Girl" (a song later done by the FEEDERZ). "Sometimes I Don't Know" delves into thrash a bit. The closing songs for each side provide a change of pace—the brooding "Destruction Unit" and "Serena II," a poem set to a mass of feedback that really doesn't work. Otherwise, this is a roaring good time. (sloperecords.com)

Three interconnected Pittsburgh (and environs) bands have new releases. CONCEALED BLADE unleash a barrage of throat-grabbing hardcore on their self-titled 12" on Beach Impediment. This wrecking crew were one of the best bands I saw last year. A speedy attack interspersed with some floor-pounding breakdowns. Not chuggy tough-guy hardcore, just a mean sound with guttural vocals and lyrics filled with plenty of rage and negativity. Sounds like fun, huh? BLOOD PRESSURE recently put out a three-song demo for their Mexican tour with CONCEALED BLADE and it picks up where their album left off. Bruising, no-nonsense hardcore and few bands are doing it as well as they are these days.

S.L.I.P., with three of the people from CONCEALED BLADE, offer something different from the other two bands on their *Slippy When Wet* album on Sorry State. A rockin'n'rollin' concoction but not cock rock. This is something darker, along the lines of earlier ANNIHILATION TIME, punks scratching their rock itch. Twin-guitar riffing offering an arsenal of edgy, Ginn-inspired squalls. "There's No Hope For The USA," offers a bit of protest music for the New Dawn, a comment on "the perfect storm of human trash." "Trend Setter" packs a whole lot of sarcastic snark for its tongue-in-cheek putdown of every stereotypical punk subgroup you can think of. (Beach Impediment, beachimpedimentrecords.com; Blood Pressure, bloodpressurepgh.bandcamp.com; Sorry State, sorrystaterecords.com)

Another new Sorry State release is the first 12" release from DAVIDIANS, *City Trends* and it continues to expand on the band's strongest qualities. Nervy, tension and release hardcore with an abundance of rhythmic complexity. There's also a haunting guitar sound, eschewing power chords for something sinewy and sinister. Once again, a band that could fit into what I've been tagging "outsider hardcore"—a frayed ambiance, a sense of foreboding that doesn't follow standard verse/chorus/verse structures. There's also the willingness to experiment a bit, as with the minute or so of feedback damage bridging "Lousy With Hagar" and "Track Suit Glasses." NASA SPACE UNIVERSE and BILL BONDSMEN are two bands that I've covered the past few years who bring in that sort of a vibe.

Finally, Tom Potter has been kicking

around the Michigan music scene for years, having played in BANTAM ROOSTER, DIRTBOMBS and others and he's put together a new band, BEASTEATER, with guys from BLOWTOPS and FATAL FIGURES, two loud Buffalo bands of note. Got all that? Their self-titled album provides plenty of loud, heavy, fuzzy riff-o-rama. Noisy, buzzy and boisterous and, yes, it's got a garage rock pulse but it's under a heavy cloud of distortion. More psycho than psychedelic and, to quote the lyrics on the lengthy "I Eat Scum," they really do sound like they're about to lose their minds. Cool cover choice in SWELL MAPS' "International Rescue," which is given a good battering.

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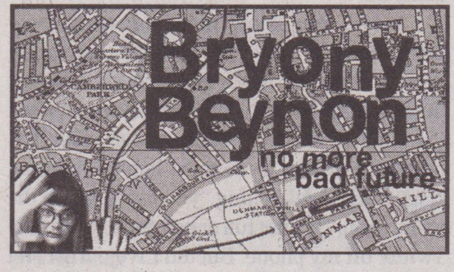

New Year's Eve 2016. Body stuttering for breath, adrift on a warm high, meters deep in a wikihole brought on by watching Australian network television throwback TV show known as *Rage* (I think its closest equivalent would be *MTV 120 Minutes*, except the amazing cultural hall of mirrors policy here means that they will automatically play anything submitted by an Australian band, a challenge I hereby accept.) So anyway, I was looking up stupid bands related to the Prodigy and happened upon a nineties punk-metal band with a bassist listed only as "Shop." Wheezing, this reminded me I had always meant to collate my favorite punk names—easy proof that it's no accident that the first three letters of punk are pun! We all need the arcane obtuse silly fucker mentality of punk more than ever, here are eight great punk names and their owners. Tell me yours.

Des Truction: Drummer in New Zealand first wavers the Scavengers, who, as pretty much the only Auckland punks besides the Suburban Reptiles in 1977, went pretty hard with the punk names with such little competition, but look, only Des hit silly genius conceptual pay dirt. The rest of the band limply proffered, in reverse order of shitness: Johnny Volume, Ronnie Recent (Brendan Perry who'd go on to be one half of Dead Can Dance, no less) Mal Licious, and finally the drummer..."Mike Lezbian." Come on mate. Best Scavengers song is "Mysterex."

Lydia Lunch: Just forever perfect, most quotable fuck up, perfect living relic of the old New York, truly true chaos punk, and in today's context almost repellant and cringeworthy in so many ways, but only in ways that we all are but perhaps better train ourselves to hide. Seeing her speak these days always makes me wonder if these scenes I fetishize and idolize would have actually been absolute punisher hotbeds. Think about it. Still, with lines like this, how can you resist? "I may be putting my cock on the line here, but I think we need to go directly to the source and simply get rid of God. After all, God was the first cop."

Robert Gotobed: This always struck me as a hilarious name choice until I was informed it was not really a punk name but an actual real surname. What?! A medieval English one, apparently, and thus spaketh the research: "Beds were such rare things in ancient times, that to have one, was a matter of local comment to the point where the person concerned was named from this piece of furniture. Certainly early nicknames were bestowed for much less reason than this. However it also has to be said that the medieval period was renowned for its Chaucerian humor which was almost always direct, and often obscene. The first known nameholder was one John Gotobedde of Barnwell, Cambridge, in 1269." Being sucked in again. Some years later I looked it up again and found out it technically is a punk name, given that his real name is Robert Grey...moral of the story never listen to your mates, always listen to Wire, ideally the first half of *Pink Flag* and the last half of *Chairs Missing*.

Poly Styrene: Girl genius, purveyor of plastic future, the braces and the glory. Have you ever tried to do Poly karaoke? Legitimately impossible. Poly had frequent visions and was hospitalized several times, once with a schizophrenia diagnosis. She was hit over the heat with a baseball bat in Brixton as a child. She was run over by a fire engine which shattered her pelvis as an adult. She saw bright pink glowing UFOs in the skies. If there isn't some Hare Krishna fan-fiction about Poly and Ray Cappo there should be. The ad she posted in *Melody Maker* (yes she initiated the band, yes it was her vision, yes yes yes) for bandmates read "'young punx who want to stick it together."

Frank Discussion: The Feederz frontman is probably best known for wearing the corpse of a dead German Shepherd dog on stage at 924 Gilman. Slightly overdetermined situationist-wannabe antics put Frank and co. into a lineage with Crass and the KLF, but let's be real, they didn't quite have the tunes. Still, better to go down in punk history for freaking out some squares with animal shelter off-cuts than not at all.

Lance D'Boyle: Makes it in because I was touting this as a great unused Punk name until learning that of course, Lance played drums for the late great Vi Subversa's Poison Girls! Vi, who I'll talk about here because I don't know shit about Lance (other than his real name was Gary, but middle name Lance!) was born in 1935, which I am almost certain makes her the oldest punk from that era, but I would love to hear other contenders for that title.

Lux Interior: I swear to god, it hadn't occurred to me how many levels this name works on until I wrote it down. Quite possibly the apotheosis of punk names? Snake man. Blower of mics. Lux on Poison Ivy: "It's hard to figure out how we're different because we're together all the time and we always do everything together. In a way it's kind of one thing, me and her, but she's also very much an individual and very strong. She grows like a tree. She's faceted like a diamond. There's a million sides to Ivy and I just love all of them."

Rev Volting: Of Rev Volting and the Backstabbers, a good example of making the most of a good name when you think of one. Sounds extra cool in a Glaswegian accent. British readers will be pleased to know Backstabbers bassist went on to appear in Scotsploitation sitcoms such as *Rab C Nesbitt* and *Gary: Tank Commander*. Looking up ol' Rev got me on a massive Paisley punk tip (bands like XS Discharge, the Fegs, Defiant Pose) who put out a comp 7" called *Ha! Ha! Funny Polis* on their label... Groucho Marxist. It cannot just be me who draws strength from such beautiful wordplay. You're welcome, friends.

***

Ha! Ha! Political Afterthought: So, things are quite...awful right now?

A small favor if you will: check in with yourself if you find that you're punishing people around you for not knowing everything you know, not quite being there yet with a certain specific slant of analysis of our current doom conditions. It's a very common symptom of the type of pressure we are all under to visit the retribution we wish we could send to the palaces and the mansions onto would-be comrades instead. There is no excuse for scapegoatery in these fractious times, and it weakens me to watch that. The center cannot hold, of course, we figured as much. You, too, must not unravel with the world or there will be nothing left. We must be vigilant, deliberate and intensive about holding all of our selves

together. Use rope, tape, hands.

I have installed a panic button on my internet browser when the rising panic in my chest that happens after a few minutes of scrolling starts to bite at my breathing. It's called intotime.com (a piece by net artist Rafael Rozendaal) and—together with breathing—I highly recommend it. In such an atmosphere, I ponder, scrolling once again, is there anything more ill-founded than locating harm or hatred in places where what you have is a disagreement? Whether for a power kick or a fleeting sense of "own-back," be wary. See, there's a certain rhetorical universe of projected righteousness that caught hold somewhere between the eras of folk punk and woke punk where the path to careful peace and learning got littered with snark grenades. It is not weak to acknowledge an apology even if you feel it to be imperfect.

I'm so worried. Enabled by the internet and the ability we all have to rub our hands at public digital floggings, the gnarlier angels of some natures seem to zero in on anyone who can easy be perceived as a witch in our midst, for a slight or a misstep, so the pile on continues, a performance to exorcise the pent up powerlessness we all feel. Trouble is and it's getting harder and harder to name this horrible reflex without sounding like you're a shill for the dark side. All this just as the stakes get higher and higher, too. We can all fuck up, just as bullies exist in all walks of life, but scuttling in the corners feeding off another easy target call-out while the world burns? That is inexcusable. Of course, even me suggesting such a thing could have a cut-out response, I'm *tone policing* and in any case perhaps asking people to be less inexplicably cruel all the time so we can cast our blows more effectively on actual fucking Nazis is just *respectability politics*. Maybe so, but as someone who spends a stupid amount of time doing actual real talk accountability shit where there is often no clear path, right answer or simple conclusion, I feel kind of qualified to name this horrible sub-phenom for what it is, you know?

One thing I am sure of is that we are going to need a bigger life raft, and if you cannot reach your arms out to those who don't speak your pontificating vocabulary, the new utopia will burn before we even get there. I want to salvage all unintended pain and scoop us out of this weird hard world. Let's be as critical of social capital as we are the other kind and be wary of easy targets. Nuance, like kindness, is a generative commodity. We need more and not less people on our side.

i don't think that i need to sit here with you fucking dildos any more

by Imogen Binnie

Good news! I'm typing this column from the driver's seat of my goddamn car on the side of the goddamn road twenty minutes from my goddamn house, all broken down in the winter. I guess the thermostat blew? I dunno, man. What do I know about cars?

It feels nice that there is a relatively small scale concrete shitty thing happening in my life as I write this because at this point—winter 2017—what could an American even write that was not, to some degree, about the relatively large scale shitty things that are happening in this country? Gimme something small to worry about. Something I can handle. Something I can fucking do something about. Shit is already at the point where I'm like, what horrible things will have happened in the world between my car breaking down and my getting ahold of someone who has Triple A and can get my car towed? But the good news is that I'm pretty sure that smug irony is finally dead. Or at least in remission. But hopefully dead! Which rules!

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I was trying to remember whether it felt like this in 2000, the last time us dumb idiots elected a Republican, and I think one of the reasons I can't remember whether it did or not is that I was a piece of shit back then. Like: even worse. Maybe that's unfair to me? Probably not. I was in college, ostensibly a straight white cis dude, convinced that I could keep my straight white cis dude status intact by keeping "gender stuff" a secret forever, with "gender stuff" here meaning "staying up all night every night in incapacitating emotional pain (which had also started spilling out into the daytime) staring at a computer trying to figure out how to be trans while also not being trans, a system of self-awarenesses, self-denials and glaring blind spots toward self-awareness so complex that it would have exhausted me completely to maintain it even if I was getting any sleep." And man, let me tell you: ostensibly being a straight white cis guy in America, believing that's who you're gonna be for the rest of your life, it's awesome. I mean, nothing has to fucking matter to you. You just do whatever and the culture you grew up in gives you a thousand ways to rationalize it so that whether it is successful or not, whether it is self-indulgent or not, you can frame yourself basically as a hero for doing it. There would be no direct consequences on the election of that fake cowboy idiot on my life. I could care if I wanted—go to protests or whatever—but literally anything I did beyond having a self-righteous opinion was, like, above and beyond.

Combine that with a dawning awareness that I wasn't going to be able to maintain this status forever and its accompanying insecurity eating its way out from my skeleton, and what you get is someone who's maybe not a reliable narrator about that era. You know? I mean I remember it being scary and I did go to protests and stuff when they announced that we'd be having a war or wars. I was a "don't" in *Vice* for having too much anti-Bush / anti-war shit on my messenger bag. I remember that things were pretty shitty. But did things feel the same kind of ominously weird as they do now? I don't know. Maybe. It's hard to compare.

I mean, you know the thing about how the internet is a river of garbage that we all keep dunking our heads into a couple hundred times a day because once or twice a week you find a quarter? The garbage river has become a torrent of damned humans melting disgustingly and yelling "you are going to die really soon." It's not fun or helpful. I had to take Twitter off my phone. But did Livejournal feel like this? I think it didn't. But it's frustrating how different a place I was in at the time and therefore how hard it is to compare them.

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We've been waiting for irony to die for a long time, right? Cool smug irony is death and a million years ago, when I was read as and struggling to be a cool white cis guy, it was all I had in my veins. No blood. "Fuck blood," I probably said ironically. And I'm not trying to brag like I've divested myself of it completely. I just...I think that I've been moving toward something better? And that a lot of us have.

I know that me and a bunch of other queer jerks spent a lot of time under Obama—our last Democrat president, maybe you remember him—being cruel to other queers whose politics or analyses weren't as good as our own? Like vicious mockery and dismissal. I remember Julie Blair talking up some obnoxious queers-baiting-queers thing some homo had written for prettyqueer.com, saying "the only way to win is not to play;" I remember arguing that judgmental disdain was a great way to show people that their thinking was shallow and stupid.

I think that what I'm really writing about here, besides a Catalogue Of The Kinds Of Assholes I've Been, is the backdrop against which we do our work and what that backdrop does to that work. I mean, I don't know anything about any of this, I'm just hotboxing a broken car on the side of the road in the

snow, hoping that our president doesn't make it illegal for trans people to be trans anymore and talking shit, but I guess my thought is that the stakes were different for doing lefty / progressive / anarchist work under a president who was nominally progressive or on the left (whatever arbitrary value "left" might have in mainstream American politics) from what they are under a blatant authoritarian right-wing puppet of global capital and the American right. You know? I feel like there's been this hard shift toward very earnest modes of communication and protest and action. People going to airports with signs. Teenagers in little towns in New England holding Fuck Trump rallies every Sunday on the traffic circle in the middle of town. (Hi, Brattleboro.) That kind of stuff.

I know that it's really different for different people, that a lot of people of color, for example, have been pretty unsurprised that America took this opportunity to make its subtext (white supremacy and its friends) into text. I'm not talking about being surprised or unsurprised by this as much as I'm thinking about what people are doing with this feeling that we've got to do something. You know? Although now that I'm thinking about it, I'm also thinking about the Movement for Black Lives—probably the most important thing that's happened in America in the last couple years—and how it's not really that big on irony or smugness, either. Maybe, in the end, as happens so often, what I'm talking about really does boil down to the toxicity of whiteness.

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Maybe I'm just calling out myself here. I feel like maybe I was kind of complacent under Obama. I think I thought I was doing a good job and I think I really couldn't see how complacent I'd gotten. I mean I did stuff and talked about stuff, but I think in retrospect most stuff (queer stuff, race stuff, critical analysis, the sense we make of class in America) felt to me like it was...if not moving forward, then at least not moving backward. So it felt like we could just chill out and do our thing and stuff wouldn't collapse any worse than it already was.

Like a lot of people who worry, I've been reading Rebecca Solnit's *book Hope In The Dark*, and a point that she keeps coming back to is that when you look at history, it seems like this static, inevitable thing, but that's not how it looks from the other side, from before things happen. Nothing is *ever* inevitable. You do stuff—you commit to things—and you hope they'll work out. People who try to change things are never assured that then will. We spend a lot of time thinking "It might not work." But the thing that I think we need to remember—which is bolstered by earnestness and hamstrung by irony—is that it might.

She also writes about this other thing, which is that you don't have to be a highly visible reality TV star for your ideas to blow up and take over. Radical ideas start in the margins and make their way into the mainstream and then get retconned, with the passage of time, to look like they've always been at the center. And look: our ideas are better. "White people are better than other people?" "Trickle down economics," or whatever the fuck the 2017 version of that is? These things are demonstrably stupid. Whereas "capitalism produces inequality," or "patriarchy is bad for everyone"—not only are these things true, but they explain things. They make this mess make sense, whereas racist scapegoating, for example, does the exact fucking opposite.

So yeah. Now that Mike Pence wants it to be illegal again, gay marriage suddenly doesn't seem quite so embarrassingly bourge. I'm a social worker who can barely repair her car again. My mom, a nice middle class white lady, is reading about the Zapatistas. This smug irony stuff, I don't want it anymore and it feels like a lot of other people don't want it anymore, either, which is great. Some assholes on the right have definitely picked up the smug irony ball and started running with it, and you know what? Good. Fuck them. They can have it. We've got something better—we've got a lot of things that are way better—and here in Donald Trump's America, I've got the motherfucking optimism. Let's do stuff. And let's mean it.

ENDNOTES:

1) I guess one thing on Twitter that was better than a quarter was when that Antifa punched that nazi in the face. The exception that proves the rule!

2) Panic attacks are punk but not everything that is punk is good.

3) RIP Twitter, 2008-2016, whose headstone reads "Only Fun Under Obama."

4) We do have a precedent for this. Facebook was only fun under Obama Part One.

5) I don't remember who made up the thing about the internet being a river of garbage, so I can't credit them. But if it was you: good job!

6) Think about it you fucking sheep: crust is arguably the genre of music with the least smug irony, and it is inarguably the best genre of music. Probably not a coincidence.

7) Relatedly, this is what 2017 sounds like for me: Ekkaia, Iskra, Ictus, Dakhma.

8) I started another trans women / trans femme spectrum type people group. It's been almost ten years since the last one! If that sounds like it might be for you and you're in Western Mass / Southern Vermont / Eastern New Hampshire, contact Green Mountain Crossroads.

9) I still have a podcast. It's called *Imogen Watches Classic Films*. There's like thirty episodes and it's free. Be the garbage you want to see in the river.

Last December, VANILLA POPPERS and YAMBAG hit the road together to do a short five-day tour around the east coast of the United States. We did a small loop, visiting Belchertown first, then NY, DC, Pittsburgh, and Buffalo to boot. Drew drums in both bands and Lia came along to party so there were eight of us riding in total. Lia doesn't play in any bands but is someone you should know if your band has been through Cleveland because she probably either booked your show or you stayed at her house. They all crammed into one van and hit the road from Cleveland and I met them in Buffalo NY, bussing it down from my current residence in Toronto. They picked me up from the Greyhound, we got some food at Amy's, and then continued on our way to the first show, another seven or so hour drive from Buffalo. It was chilly out and had snowed in recent weeks. The clunky van had heating but also seemed to have a lot of holes. Two people were up front while the rest of us sat in fold-out chairs, on beanbags or the spare tire, huddled in a circle and sharing blankets to keep warm.

We got into Belchertown and went straight to Tony's house, where we were staying that night. You might know Tony from SQRM or…what else is he in? I got to know him as the YANKEE PEDDLER who was always welcome in Cleveland to play at Now That's Class, usually for Horrible Fest. Otherwise known as being a super nice Italian, his small one-bedroom house is located on the edge of some woods at the back of a car park for a Greek restaurant where it sits all by itself. It was about to be Christmas and he'd set the appropriate mood for it, with a decorated tree in the living area, Christmas lights hung around the mantle and '50s Christmas records spun on the turntable. It was cozy and endearing, and while we all sat around chatting and munching on pizza he had made and had a few drinks (he made me a Mar-tony), none of us really wanted to leave and go back out into the cold and to the show. Jaybo (from HOAX) came by with his new baby and I made sure

not to go too close because babies usually cry around me.

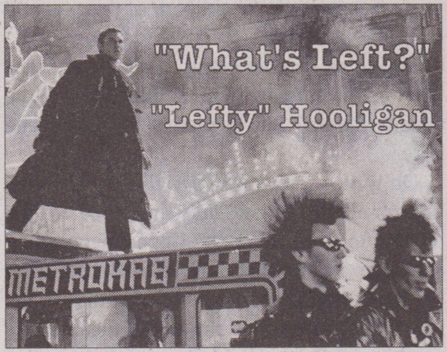
The show was about to start so we got back in the van and got lost on the dark winding small town streets trying to find the venue, which was a cabin that apparently is the oldest house in Belchertown. The space was small, but there was a decent crowd of people hanging out the back door or drinking inside. There were five bands on the bill. Two locals opened but I was distracted by my nerves about the upcoming set and so wasn't paying much attention. We played before YAMBAG this show, which we alternated every night. I tripped over Jo's lead accidentally unplugging his guitar, and that's about as exciting as it got. People were pushing each other around having some fun, then it was over and I went and pulled my hair out over how much I hate myself—that's basically my move every time we play. Locals MEAT DREAMS headlined. I thought they were awesome and one of my favorite bands that tour. I watched most of the set until someone threw some shitty mixed drink in my face and I stumbled into the next room to clean my blinded and burning eyes. After the show I lost my cool at a lady who was laughing about throwing Four Loko into the crowd. Profanities were used but Tony jumped in and stopped me for a quiet word, informing me she actually lived at the house. I apologized to him because he had booked the show, but when I turned back around to keep having a go at her, she had left the room. We stuck around for a bit, selling merch and talking to some really nice people before heading back to Tony's for a drink. Sooner than later though, we pulled out sleeping bags and packed into the living room like sardines, having to get on the road early to make NY the next night. We woke up and Tony had already left for work as a schoolteacher. We got some diner food, went to a thrift shop, and then hit the road to NYC.

We got into NY a few hours before the show was due to begin. Steve and I hit a vegan pizza joint near Bar Matchless (where the show was that night) and everyone else went looking for the real deal a few blocks away. After loading in, I started slamming drinks like I'd found an oasis in the fucking desert. I was out to get fucked up because I couldn't deal with the anxiety of playing this show. I thought this was all supposed to get easier? I got hooked up with some illicits, being on a mission for destruction, and by the time we played I don't really remember anything. Although a few days later I realized we'd attempted the RAMONES cover we did our entire summer tour but absolutely butchered it and cut it before the end. There was a decent crowd, I think I spoke to some people and very possibly punished a few more. KALEIDOSCOPE ended the show, then we hung at the bar a while longer before loading out and I was walked to the van (because I was the living dead by that point). We drove to Philly to stay at Jimmy's house for the night.

I woke up and felt like absolute hell, no surprise. Finally, a physical state to match my mental one! We went and got Dotties Donuts, hit up Sit And Spin, then made our way to DC just a few hours away. This house-turned venue was nicknamed "The Chill Factory." We loaded in then got back in the van to find a local Caribbean place that had good vegan options. The people at the house were super nice but I was a terrible guest and hid from everyone, mostly just walking circles around the kitchen table and trying not to repeatedly beat my head against a wall. I was still feeling miserable from the night before plus had just gotten my period so felt like a train wreck. It was a small crowd. The weirdest thing that bummed me out about the show was the lighting. I get that sounds shallow, but the show was in their front living room and the Christmas lights they had weren't bright enough, so the normal lights were on and it felt like a total mood killer. Or maybe I was still wishing I could hide. No one really moved around so I danced around to YAMBAG and then went after Richard (singer of YAMBAG) during our set. The show ended and we went and got pupusas. When we got back most people had split so we just sat around chatting to the residents, who I'd also like to thank for having the show and letting us stay. We all crashed out in the space we had just played. We were thinking about heading straight to Pittsburgh to hang with some good friends but there was an ice warning and the freeways were super sketchy so we decided to just tackle it in the daylight.

Richard and Lia smashed ice off the van using a broken guitar neck they'd found on the front lawn. We got on the road and made a beeline to Spak Bros, but when we got there we decided it wasn't the same without John Villegas so instead went to visit him at his record store, Cruel Noise. He eventually shut the shop for the night and went off to get gear for PEACE TALKS who were opening the show. The venue was back around the corner from Spak Bros, in a basement. I think it was the first and last time it ended up getting used. We all got some cheesesteaks and pizzas before the show kicked off. By that point it had started to rain. A lot of people came out including a lot of younger kids that looked like they didn't often come out to these sorts of punk shows. It was really cool and the best show of the tour. The basement was packed out, the crowd got into each band and CONCEALED BLADE ended the show full of energy, with what I'd say was my favorite set of the tour. Richard, who sings in YAMBAG and also does Saucepan Records, and I did a *Cruel Noise* podcast after the show back at the Cruel Noise record store with John; it was about midnight at this point. John was drunk and I had no voice so I think it came out a bit weird but Richard said he was happy with it. It's still not online but I recommend checking out all the Cruel Noise podcasts already online for some good banter and tunes. We went to the Rock Room and I picked up a drink right before last call, hanging out for a few more hours before I needed to lie down and die somewhere. In the morning we got Lilys, hung out at Cruel Noise some more and eventually after a lot of procrastinating and goodbyes, got on the way to Buffalo, the last show of this mini tour.

It was dark when we got into Buffalo, and the city was covered in a very thick layer of snow. We got to the show early but with not enough time to go off and find food for eight people. Nick's basement is a new space that's recently opened up for shows on Buffalo's east side, known as Deep Space Eight. It's a quieter part of town that snow plows don't bother coming around to, so the streets were almost as icy and blocked up as the drive way and yard we precariously carried the gear through. The RADIATION RISKS fellas were more than accommodating, making us vegan food and donuts which were amazing, except the Moxy-flavored one. The terrible idea to try that came from Biff, no surprises. They also set up a little bar and you know I was going back for refills as often as I could but eventually gave up trying to be drunk because I was exhausted and my voice was still shot from all my wailing over the last few days. I feel like at the time we didn't appreciate their hospitality as much as we should have because in our minds we were ready for tour to be over and to get on with our lives post-tour, pre-Christmas. But we felt really taken care of so thanks to RADIATION RISKS if I didn't say it enough on the night. The first act on was DILDONTS, as much a theatrical act as a musical one. They had some props in their set they used including some tiny stools, which we all posed for photos with before the show. RADIATION RISKS headlined. There wasn't a big crowd but for the weather going on it was appreciated that anyone came out at all. All of us were worn out. It was a Sunday night and a few of us had to work early in the morning so the van back to Cleveland left right after the show. I reluctantly waved goodbye to all my pals as they left me behind in Buffalo so I could catch a bus back to Toronto the next day. Big thanks to everyone who helped us out.



ONE

"The weapon of criticism cannot, of course, replace criticism by weapons, material force must be overthrown by material force; but theory also becomes a material force as soon as it has gripped the masses. Theory is capable of gripping the masses as soon as it demonstrates ad hominem, *and it demonstrates* ad hominem *as soon as it becomes radical. To be radical is to grasp the root of the matter. But for man the root is man himself."*

—Karl Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*, 1843

I claim to be a skeptic, an atheist, a supporter of science and rationality, yet I got my contradictions. One of these is that I collect "charms." I pick up trinkets from places, events, actions, and people that start out as souvenirs but eventually become fetish objects. Invested memories transubstantiate into spirit power with time. I used to carry around a kind of personal medicine bundle of charms that grew larger and more uncomfortable until I realized my habit was absurd and a bit obsessive. I retired the bundle a while back, but I didn't ever throw it away. And I usually have one or two tiny personal charms on me as I go about my day.

Segue into this month's topic—the Left and their fetishes—as we transition from discussing the elections to leftist politics. I'm using the British possessive pronoun "their" instead of the American "its" to emphasize not only the multitude of fetishes but the plurality of American Lefts.

Broadly speaking, the Left in this country falls into democratic, Leninist, and libertarian categories. Each of these categories can then be further subdivided. The democratic Left falls into subcategories like the Democratic Party's left wing, electoral third parties, independent liberals and progressives, non-Marxist socialists, democratic socialists, and social democrats. Similarly, the Leninist Left comes in Marxist-Leninist, Stalinist, Hoxhaist, Trotskyist, and Maoist subcategories. We can dig deeper into each of these subcategories until we drill down to the level of singular organizations.

As for the libertarian Left, what I often call the left of the Left, it too breaks down into various subcategories of left anarchism (mutualism, collectivism, syndicalism, communism) and the ultraleft (council communism and left communism). Setting aside this rudimentary deconstruction, I still think the libertarian Left possesses the potential to bring its components into dialogue with each other to theoretically transcend the overall Left's historic limitations. Add Autonomism, neo- or post-Leninism, insurrectionism, and communization to expand the political discourse in this potent mélange and I'm hoping that some grand, revolutionary synthesis on the left of the Left will emerge that cuts across all three categories of the Left—democratic, Leninist, and libertarian. By the way, these three happen to be the three overarching fetishes on the American Left.

Here, we're not talking about fetish as an object with power, but as an idea with power, an idea embedded in social history that is also embodied in social relations and structures. It's about a Left devoted to democracy, or a Left centered on scientific socialism, or a Left championing individual and social liberation. I passed through several political phases on my journey through the left of the Left and I entertained various narrower organizing ideas along the way—non-violence as an anarcho-pacifist, the power of the people or the power of revolt as a left anarchist, the working class as a left communist—before I distanced myself from the ultraleft due to my growing skepticism. Orthodox Leftists have their own parallel set of fetish ideas; the unions, the proletariat, the vanguard party, history, socialist struggles for national liberation, etc. The two *idées fixes* that dominated the Left historically have been the working class and identity nationalism, with various workers' revolts, movements, and regimes vying with numerous ethnically / racially based national liberation struggles for preeminence.

What's behind the fetishizing of these Leftist tropes is the notion of agency, that something will act as a unifying basis for initiating revolution, changing society, and making history. That a revolutionary proletariat or that socialist struggles for national liberation will be central to this process. In the US, this means either pursuing the illusion of working class unity or the fantasy of a rainbow coalition of identity movements to affect any such change. Never mind that class runs against ethnic / racial groupings, and that nationalism ignores class divisions, so that class struggles and national struggles invariably obstruct each other, making true cross-organizing difficult if not impossible. Both the working class and ethnic / racial identity nationalism are each fragmenting, the former under the pressure of capitalism and the latter under the influence of tribalism.

Me, I've always had a soft spot for the Marxist idea of the working class first becoming a "class in itself" and then a "class for itself" capable of self-activity, self-organization, and self-emancipation through world proletarian revolution. But while I think that organized labor will be an important element of any potential basis for social power, that's a far cry from believing that a united working class will bring about social revolution. I'm not even sure that effective social power in the face of state and capital is feasible these days. I might also be naïve as hell to think that it's possible to create a grand, revolutionary synthesis on the left of the Left. What I do know is that, even to create such a potential, we need to suspend all our cherished Leftist fetishes.

Easier said than done.

TWO

Frederick Engels wrote in the introduction to Marx's 1895 essay "The Class Struggles in France" that, in the wake of the 1848 uprisings across Europe, "the street fight with barricades … was to a considerable extent obsolete." In the struggle between popular insurrection and military counter-insurgency, the military almost invariably wins because "the superiority of better equipment and training, of unified leadership, of the planned employment of the military forces and of discipline makes itself felt." "Even in the classic time of street fighting, therefore, the barricade produced more of a moral than a material effect," according to Engels, who concluded: "Does that mean that in the future the street fight will play no further role? Certainly not. It only means that the conditions since 1848 have become far more unfavorable for civil fights, far more favorable for the military. A future street fight can therefore only be victorious when this unfavorable situation is compensated by other factors."

One such relatively recent street fight that proved surprisingly successful were the 1999 Seattle WTO protests, the inspiring Battle of Seattle [N30]. The WTO Ministerial Conference of November 30-December 1, 1999, witnessed a fortuitous confluence of elements that temporarily prevented the conference from starting, shut down the city of Seattle, and initiated the beginning of the worldwide anti-globalization movement. The first was the sheer number of demonstrators, which was estimated at a minimum of 50,000. Second was the broad array of organizations: labor unions like the AFL-CIO, NGOs like Global Exchange, environmental groups like Greenpeace, religious groups like Jubilee

2000, and black bloc anarchists. Third was their alignment in various networks and coalitions, from the overarching green-blue teamsters-and-turtles alliance to the nonviolent Direct Action Network (DAN). The fourth significant element was the diversity of tactics employed, from old style mass marches and rallies through innocuous teach-ins, street celebrations, and more strident nonviolent direct action blockades and lockdowns of street intersections, to the miniscule black bloc rampage of 100 to 200 individuals memorialized by yours truly in my blog header picture. Finally, there was the element of surprise.

DAN activists took control of key intersections in the pre-dawn hours, before the Seattle Police Department (SPD) mobilized. By 9:00 a.m., when the marches, rallies, teach-ins, celebrations, and black bloc riot started in earnest, the nonviolent direct-action intersection lockdowns had effectively shut down the city streets. WTO delegates were unable to get from their hotels to the convention center, and the SPD were effectively cut in two, with a police cordon around the convention center isolated from the rest of the city and the SPD by the massed demonstrators. Unable even to respond to the black bloc riot, the SPD grew increasingly frustrated and eventually fired pepper spray, tear gas canisters, and stun grenades to unsuccessfully try to reopen various blocked intersections. The WTO's opening ceremonies were cancelled, the mayor of Seattle declared a state of emergency, a curfew, and a 50-block "no-protest zone," and the SPD took the rest of the day into the evening to clear the city streets. The next day, December 1, the governor of Washington mobilized two National Guard battalions as well as other police agencies to secure Seattle's no-protest zone and permit the WTO to meet, despite ongoing protests and riots. In all, over 500 people were arrested on various charges.

Compare this to the protests on Inauguration Day, 2017. It can be argued that the number of protesters and the breadth of protesting organizations were even greater than in the Battle of Seattle. Organized into three distinct protesting coalitions by the Workers World Party, the ANSWER Coalition, and the anarchist / ultraleft Disrupt J20 network, the tactics employed by the protesters were perhaps not as diverse. Mass marches and rallies occurred around the capitol blocking traffic and shutting down streets. Nonviolent direct action attempted to blockade buildings and lockdown intersections, and numerous efforts were made to obstruct the checkpoints meant to screen Inauguration attendees with tickets. And the black bloc, there numbering over 500, did their usual roaming smashy-smashy. All of this was to no avail as the DCPD held the strategic high ground by controlling the city streets from the get go. The National Guard was never mobilized and the city was never shut down. Only about 200 people were arrested, with those arrested now facing harsh felony riot charges.

I did black bloc actions in San Francisco on Columbus Day, 1992, and during the 2003 Gulf War protests, where I escaped getting kettled and arrested by the SFPD. I also followed with great interest the running street battles between the black bloc and OPD during Occupy Oakland. But I'm 64 years old, and the black bloc street fighting tactic is a young person's game. What's more, and while frequently extremely disruptive, the cat-and-mouse of street fighting cannot be compared to any form of urban guerrilla warfare. At its best, black bloc successes are very restricted. They might give their participants a sense of elation and teach them maneuverability, teamwork, and flexibility on the fly—both physical and tactical—but they cannot overwhelm and defeat a better armed, better trained, more organized, and more disciplined police force without other favorable factors such as the element of surprise. Thus Engels was correct, and we're not even talking about confronting the National Guard or the US Army. Nor are we considering police and military forces willing to open fire on peaceful protesters as is often the case in autocratic Third World countries. So while I have a soft spot for the black bloc, I think the tactic has limited usefulness.

Next month, I get down and dirty with my analysis of the Left's numerous problems.

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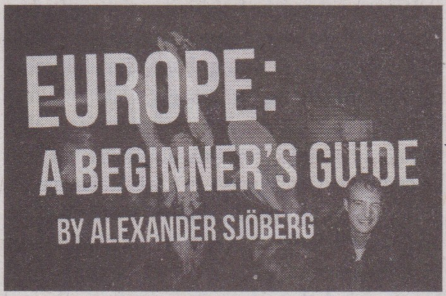

I sit in a rented apartment. It's a family holiday, and I'm bored. To be fair I always get bored after just minutes of nothing happening. But seriously, I'm in my early twenties and I want some goddamn hardcore and brews if you catch my drift. Gosh! Nuff of this parental paradise vacation.

So I think hard and long… Who do I know here on this holiday island in the middle of the Mediterranean? Surely there's no punk scene here.

Oh wait. I remember. ORDEN MUNDIAL are from here! And not only that, but I had the chance to book them in Copenhagen some year ago. I get online and write Bernat from the band, and hours later we're sitting in his car driving from one bar to the next on the outskirts of Palma de Mallorca. We end up at some squatted ranch—yes, a whole f… ranch, seriously—and there's a gig with four bands I don't remember the names of.

A few years later I sit in a basement in Barcelona, sweat, blood and ink running down my arm. The tattoist Error and former DESTINO FINAL-drummer is staining my baby boy skin and it's the second time he's done so. Back at his home I discover that I'm far from the only Scandinavian to have visited. His roomie Guillem from UNA BÈSTIA INCONTROLABLE names basically any travelling punk I know from the Copenhagen area and neighboring Malmö, Sweden.

There is, of course, a reason for this reminiscence. To me the fact I can text a friend in Mallorca, get tattooed by another in Barcelona and—recently—start a band with a Madrid-born living in Copenhagen, tells the tale of two punk cultures very closely related. And if you weren't convinced by my cute stories, consider this: During every single K-Town festival in Copenhagen since 2011, at least one Spanish band has played, which doesn't sound like much until you look at the rest of Europe, where no single country, with the exception of Denmark's neighbor Sweden, can show the same figure. Impressive.

So one starts to wonder. Why is there this special connection between Spain and Copenhagen?

First off, let's dive into the musical side. See, there is a specific kind of punk which persists in Denmark; the so-called K-Town punk, which has melancholic yet harmonic melodies and catchy punk-rocky riffs as its trademarks. In Spain—and yes, I am going to generalize—it's easy to find bands fitting that exact same description, especially if you look to Barcelona. Just take a listen to RATA NEGRA from Spain and PLANET Y from Denmark. The roots of both scenes are also very similar; Spain's ÚLTIMO RESORTE and Denmark's ELECTRIC DEADS are comparable beyond coincidence.

One often overlooked fact is that many of the Danish bands choose to sing in their native language. There is, of course, some who choose not to. NIGHT FEVER and the WAR GOES ON are good examples. But the classic

K-Town bands GORILLA ANGREB and AMDI PETERSENS ARMÉ chose to for one reason or the other. A Spanish friend once told me that "they listened and enjoyed the music anyway, because the energy, melodies and performance of the lyrics where very relatable. And if they'd sung in English, many wouldn't understand that anyway." Interestingly this goes both ways, and as I'm writing this I can't remember any Spanish bands singing in English. Surely there are some, but the most popular acts today have Spanish lyrics and the Danes don't care. I've even noticed people singing along to Spanish songs, even though I'm totally certain the sing-a-longers had no clue whatsoever what the lyrics meant. There is something about the mood of the music, which just works.

This, of course, doesn't mean the English-speaking punk-scene isn't influential. In later years bands such as WIPERS—and the Portland scene in general—have remained a strong influencer in both scenes, and perhaps this is one reason both countries have developed persistent post-punk scenes, which aren't just thriving because of the recent post-punk-wave. At the same time the scenes have developed a taste for punk art and aesthetics that go beyond mohawks and studded jackets.

Then there's the social ties. As closed-off as Danes can be to foreigners, as open-armed are the Spaniards. Where we here in Denmark are socially awkward and at the very minimum find it a hard task to greet newcomers, there is an openness in the Spanish punk scene like no other place I've visited. These two opposites go together in some weird, perfect way. Somehow the openness of Spanish punks melts the ice-cold Danes. The number of punks from Denmark who have visited Spain for gigs is big, and as mentioned before there are always Spanish bands playing the biggest punk festival in Denmark, as well as many touring Spanish bands who make sure to swing by Copenhagen whenever they get the chance.

To finish of the list, I look to the hangovers I have today. Because here lies the third clue. If there is one thing Danes are truly good at, it's partying. This fact is often overlooked by foreigners, because who could imagine that these cave-trolls from the Cold North would know how to party? Well…We do. We do indeed. Of course we also do need a lot of alcohol to do so, but if that's taken care of, you'll find a packed dancefloor in no time—and it's not pop playing on the stereo, it's punk. While Spaniards seem not to need alcohol to dare take to the dance floor, there's a big chance it's gonna be a good party if there's a Spanish band in town. And here the culture of the two countries are a perfect match. The Danes get drunk and show off their ugly dance-moves while the Spaniards make sure the dance floor isn't soaked in booze and that there are even some good-looking moves present. Decent.

All in all, I salute this bond. But mostly I salute what it means; punk connects us, the people of Europe (and even the world), in times where idiots with power want to strengthen the borders between us. I look forward to giving you more tales of European punk, similarities and differences in future columns. Now go listen to some Spanish and Danish punk, and see if you agree with me. *Animo*!

Donald Trump is not watching you have sex. And if he is, who cares? Fuck him, hope he gets a good show and then explodes.

No matter how optimistic I get (and I do get more so every year), come coup or high water, there still stalks Trauma, that blood dripping queen. Trauma is clever because she knows she has to be. PTSD is her fascia, dense and netted, disassociation is her compass, suspicion and a mean retort her hooded cape. I was telling my friend over Signal that this has been a very disabled winter, in all the gross and gorgeous ways. There is something about having some of your worst fears come true, without the simultaneous combustion of your world, that allows you to live with new fears without mistaking them for your maker. Pain and joy have to live together inside my body. Their existence does not extinguish one another. Somehow though, it's never pain that eases joy. It ignites it. And I'm not resisting for the right to say nothing was worth it anyway. Trauma doesn't remember any of these assertions. When she enters the room, it's her party. Fuck, it's her kingdom.

February 7th

A week and three days ago. I am in a hotel room in Portland, near the airport, in a bed, with my partner of three years as of this weekend. If we were not in that bed, being queer crips in love, we would probably be at a protest at the airport of one of the three cities I have lived, scrappily happily, as a Sudanese American person: Portland, San Francisco, and Seattle. So far, Seattle has treated me the best in all my complexities and intersecting marginalizations. Despite having a mayor that claims that no self-nominated bully of America will trip us out of being a Sanctuary City, people trying to enter or re-enter the United States via SeaTac and many other airports around the country are being terrorized and detained, and people who are refusing to pick up their bags and go home quietly about that are being arrested.

I am having trouble fucking. You might say it's guilt for not being out there, but being disabled and political means that I ditched not making it to every action guilt about three years ago, I guess. In the words of my brilliant, fellow Disabled Black Jersey femme activist friend Cyree Jarelle Johnson in their article "Black Cripples Are Your Comrades, Not Your Counterpoint: "Stop asking why we didn't come to your twenty-mile march; let's move forward using a diversity of tactics, holding each in equal respect." The fucking trouble seems to be about this feeling that I have that "President" Trump and his regime know that I am an animal for having the kind of sex I have, an insect for needing what I need, a mutant for moving how I move across the earth.

Steve Bannon, that toadlike sociopath, tweaking the gears of his science fair invention-cum-horror movie Donald Trump, makes me feel clammy when I think he might have opinions about my life. He said "leftists vilify conservative women because they're not a bunch of dykes that came from the Seven Sisters schools up in New England." And he's talking about me.

"He thinks I'm disgusting. And it's making it hard to feel like I know how to have sex," I force out. Tony is wrapped all around me. And he's patient, but how enticing are my hesitation and my tears? I realize this is a lot like something I used to experience as a sexual abuse and medical trauma surviving kid, who was afraid of the POC Yahoos in *Gulliver's Travels*. I was afraid of them because I intuited that they related to me, through the screen, which means I related to them, but they, like me, didn't look like almost anyone else at my small white school, in my small white town. To be related to, in this unfamiliar way, made me feel disgusting. This feeling is like that, but the inverse—I can feel how this white supremacist, misogynist, ableist administration finds me disgusting, because of how little they can relate to me.

February 9th

I am in the Seattle International Film Festival Theatre at the Egyptian seeing *I Am Not Your Negro*, a film whose text is written by James Baldwin from a book he never finished,

Remember This House, and imagined for the screen by Raoul Peck. Hearing his words, right now, as a Black person in "America," seeing his face, his hands, the other revolutionaries he called his friends, is like being sung to. Getting the music and the medicine you need. I imagine it could feel that way for other people of color as well. I don't want or need white people to feel like it's for them, but I hope they realize, for once, how privileged they are to have such things laid out for them.

As of this day, Seattle Judge Robart has already put a restraining order on Steve Bannon and Donald Trump's immigration / refugee / Black / Arab / Muslim travel ban. Three judges in the Ninth Circuit in San Francisco considered ludicrous arguments in favor of lifting the restraining order and keeping the ban. Donald Trump found their unmovedness disgraceful. We all waited with bated breath. The judges voted to get rid of the racist ban. I have literally never paid this much attention to the movement of opinion and decisions between the three branches of this so-called government. As a young Black anarchist I felt like I already knew how fucked up it all was. Now I don't feel so patient for revolution, or privileged in my ignorance. Not that what I am doing now organizing wise is so different from what I was doing when I was nineteen. The biggest difference between then and now is that I honoring the fact that I have a body. That we all do. That maybe those bodies are truly something we are fighting to protect. Which seems to be the opposite of what protection looks like, if you are an imperialist (politician, cop, developer, settler).

James Baldwin says, more beautifully than this, that Black people are told every day that they are not experiencing violence, while simultaneously being assaulted, barred entry from places they need to go, humiliated, starved (literally, spiritually, politically) out of existence. When Black people try to describe their past or current experiences, they are asked why they make "so much about race." I guess the real question is, White America, Why do you make so much about race, without being able to say that race is very, very important to you? Donald Trump and his administration are getting pretty fucking close. But many of his followers aren't ready to admit they're racist yet. Even those whites who oppose him, are teetering on the brink of losing their conception of America. Why did it ever mean that much to you, when it was never yours? You stole us, to make us work for free in a land you had stolen, and now you want to talk about Liberty and Justice for All. There is a word for this feeling I have.

January 28th

Tomorrow, my partner, who is white, was raised poor but now is a nurse and precariously middle class, female assigned, male identified, and a dyke punk forever, and I will have been together for three years. We are trying to fuck and roll around in this very clean bed before we eat pizza, drink wine, sew patches on our shit and go to the Team Dresch show, and we keep having earnest starts and bitter stops. What finally shifts my gears is when Tony says, "You want me to make the first move, but you are allowed to kiss *me*. Show me what *you* want, and I'll be into that. I'll respond." I am shocked because there is a subconscious part of me that believes that the best sign that someone really likes you and wants to have sex with you is that they try to do stuff to your body without you moving at all. But haven't I been checked out for a lot of sex of life?

I have been so afraid of seeming like an insatiable animal during sex (a brief and abusive boyfriend once told me that I was very "passionate," and no word has ever been so dripping with unappealingness), that I forgot that chances are, the other person has a body and trauma too, and wants to know that I am into them. I have been so afraid to be a part of Donald Trump's gay miscegenation nightmares that I have unwittingly let him worm his way into my intimate life. I don't want him there. I cast him out! There is a word for what misogynist white supremacists like him, like so many other even less conscious white men and their allies do to people like me, and it's gaslighting. The whole lie of America is gaslighting. The violence is always called something else. Having "Donald Trump" for "President" reminds me of being abused. It is abuse.

But in this bed, I am not being abused, and I am not being abusive by wanting sex, love, and the world. I kiss my boo. I fuck my boo. Fuck you, Donald.

The show was fun as fuck. It's generally hard for me to be up at the front of shows where I am not a #1 Must Have Fan, because I like to absorb the music in a different way when the live experience is new to me, but Team Dresch's family and fan club pushed me up in front of them to get a good long sonic drink, and it was worth it. Sex Stains opened and they make me dance for real! I really love the Tom Tom Club and Sex Stains was giving me all those unhinged genius bouncy weirdo lady vibes. I think there are also not lady identified people (beards don't mean shit about gender) in the band and that's cool too. Mecca, who is Black and seems nerdy, artsy and fearless, is one of my new favorite front people of all time.

Team Dresch, now I totally get it. Tony's been playing their two albums and 7 inch for years and I always liked them okay, but something clicked live. Something also helps me love a band when I can tell that they're nice and I think they're funny. Jody's humor reminds me of one of my favorite people and professors of all time, Jaclyn Pryor. Dykes are smarter than you. Pop punk boys got their guitar runs and their jumps from queercore dykes. I'm not interested in fact checking this or in the reality that sound and other artistic innovation often happen in mutually influenced ways. What you have you got from Black people and Gay people. Now *that* is fact. What do I have to be ashamed of, America?

February 10th

I am lying on my bed in the growing dark, a small Persian Tabby cat named Mister Mu at my feet, on the phone with my Black Disabled queer comrade Natasha, dear fierce Natasha. She tells me that she is grateful to have grown up with strong Black parents who told her that her dignity doesn't disappear just because white people have opinions.

My body feels good. I am ready, to some extent. No matter how bad stuff gets, I get more optimistic every day.

Accessibility Shout-Out: If you want to know how to participate in/support Disability Justice, learn about Disability Justice! Disabled people are fierce human beings who have a culture and ways of living and surviving and art and opinions! Someone you know might be disabled and you might not even know it. You might be disabled! Have you thought about it? Are you ashamed? I've got you. We've got nothing to be ashamed of. Get your Disability Justice primer *Skin, Tooth, and Bone* at sinsinvalid.org.

INTERCOURSE *IS* VIVISECTION

E. CONNER

I took two months off of writing this column because I was inundated by grief after losing 36 of my community members in a tragic fire. This fire has had an immense effect on my community's mental health and security. While this fire got national coverage it has faded in the imaginations of most people who do not live in Oakland's daily life. However, here in Oakland many people are now facing eviction and this has been compounded by the stress of attempting to support one another as well as taking care of ourselves. If you feel like it's possible for you to do so I'd like to urge you to donate to a fund that guarantees an immediate dispersal of funds for

those affected by the fire: bit.ly/2haw2JA

Fredy Perlman (a dead anarchist) argues in his essay, "The Continuing Appeal of Nationalism" (1984), that a focus on nationalism became part of the left's solution to imperialism. Nationalism was an attempt to solve the shortsightedness of overt colonial violence but still maintain the oppressive cohesion of a nation to use the same tactics to violently oppress. We've seen throughout history how this same move became a popular tactic for the right as well. By creating an emotional condition of fairness the idea of nationalism permits the same motions of state violence. Police, international wars, prisons, schools, and work are actors in this just as much if not more so as renegade honkys with guns in bumfuck.

The heavy handed and fraught delusion of the white working class as a great expanse of some kind of congealed and prone mass willing to do the bidding of anyone who actually acknowledges their existence is an excellent example of how malleable the idea of fairness and it's emotional impacts have become. The idea that democracy is some infallible and logical institution in need of mere *saving* is another. What is sometimes called white fragility is another.

In this moment where the attacks on personal and political freedom are not only impending but continuing and intensifying with impunity why would it be important to talk about feelings? The left has taken on an argument of security and safety for some time now. It's thought of as an appropriate reaction to the fear of violence despite the fact that the mainstay of representation of the left (white academics / intellectuals) do not often have to ever experience. People who are not affected by this history of violence over and over voice that that this violence is never *bad enough* to justify physically defending one's self and one's community.

I was sitting in a taqueria a day after thousands of people communed in Sproul Plaza on the campus of UC Berkeley to shut down the speaking event of notorious white supremacist Milo Yiannopoulos. Mr. Yiannopoulos had previously been on a long tour of college campuses across the country. It has been reported that at many of these events he advocated that other white supremacists report their fellow students to authorities if they suspect that they are immigrants. Besides the horror of having a group of assholes guessing whether or not their fellow students were born here or not being a completely insane and foolhardy endeavor it's something that also contributes directly to violence being waged upon the bodies and lives of many.

The speaking event was shut down due to thousands of people showing up en masse. There were some more aggressive measures taken that were along the lines of property destruction. Some white power fucks definitely got a little roughed up (before the police escorted them to safety, I might add) but for the most part the effectiveness of the shut down had to do with *thousands* of people refusing to leave until Milo was shut down. And so he was.

So anyway, I'm sitting in this fucking taqueria eating my tacos listening to some twerpy blowhard waxing about the importance of nonviolence. Essentially this asshole decides that *he alone* has the moral integrity to decide that *thousands* of pissed off people somehow didn't *actually understand* what was happening to them when the institution they pay thousands of dollars to was allowing someone who could directly harm them and or their entire community to speak. This isn't new and this guy is going to be validated by lots of *Huffington Post* think-pieces and the rest of the shitbags he plays Magic The Gathering with or whatever.

For these fucks *love* is a convenient solution to this problem of bigoted hate. That compassion and not self-defense is the way to save yourself and the people that you love from being murdered or imprisoned. For anyone who has seriously read any feminist theory / history it's maybe easy for us to call upon the deep complication of the idea of love as liberation. Sara Ahmed recently wrote that "Fascism can just as easily be articulated as a politics of *love:* a love for a 'we' that is fragile and in need of protection, a love that declares *we first* as an emergency." Asad Haider wrote recently, "So there is a hatred to affirm: the hatred of the existing regime, a class hatred. Only a consistent antagonism to the system makes genuine love possible. Without it, there is no hope."

There is this abusive model of love that some know all too well. It denies the altruism of friendship and community and the care and life that a more difficult more challenging love can provide. Many of us have seen this model of love play out throughout our lives in the form of authority figures and even personal relationships.

James Baldwin's famous appearance on *The Dick Cavett Show* is included in the film *I'm Not Your Negro*. In this appearance there is a tête-à-tête between Baldwin and a white academic whose name no one will remember. When the white academic starts to respond hostilely to James Baldwin's condemnation of American Whiteness as the construct that it is, the academic is cut off. James Baldwin clearly articulates the social danger inherent in having the violent institution of race thrust upon a person. He asks why he should have blind faith in the face of a boot.

Liberals want us to divest from hatred. Their proposition is a simple economic exchange and doesn't speak to the more complicated task of emotional divestment. The work of turning your life into the kind of place that nurtures you. The risk of building the kind of relationships that push you. The consequences of turning your back on this society are still dire but it's better than buying in.

ENDNOTES:

1) On March 8, 2017 there is a call for a militant international feminist strike against white colonial capitalism and all of its controls on our bodies and lives. See you in the streets.

Government Schemes Go On and On

Listen up you lumber-jags! I've got something to say, and I wanna say it now cuz now is today: '80s influenced fast-hardcore is the best kind of punk (not Oi!, I was wrong). Wherever you live (Manteca? Caracas? Saskatoon? Reykjavík? Pittsburgh?!) I'm sure there is a band (or 20 bands!) whose goal is to "combine NEGATIVE APPROACH with BLACK FLAG and have a good time." And who could blame them?! BLACK FLAG *and* NEGATIVE APPROACH? A good time?! It's a brilliant idea and it takes a rare kind of genius to come up with such inspiration. Just ask one of the dudes in the band (all-dude band). Look for him at your local punk-dive. He's the guy who has a zero'd out shaved head wearing an INFEST shirt. Maybe a dangly ear-ring? He'll tell you how ambitious their sound is: "No one was playing the kind of punk—'80s influenced fast-hardcore—that we wanted to hear, so we had to start our own band." Shut your mouth Socrates! There's a new brain-boss in town!

When I see an '80s influenced fast-hardcore band I turn into Sally and they're my Linus ("Aren't they the cutest things?") It's why I enjoy the "New Blood" section of *MRR*'s website (www.MaximumRocknRoll.gov), it's chock full of bands playing '80s influenced fast-hardcore...From all over the world! I'm grateful. Why? Becuz my five year plan (remember, I'm a skinhead not a punk) involves buying a house. But I think I'll build a house using the thousands of demo tapes put out by '80s influenced fast-hardcore bands every year. They gotta go somewhere

yaaass? Either they end up in a dumpster after moldering away inside their vocalist's closet for a couple years or they can make up the exterior of my dream home. No one appreciates '80s influenced fast-hardcore as much as I do!

And...Scene!

Bam! April Fool's n'at. Oi! will always be the best. Shove the dove and the rest! You want another April Fool's joke? Go look in the mirror! This is a serious column dealing with serious subjects. Oi! is forever rolling forward and the Gang and I don't have the luxury to play literary (we said it) dress-up even once a year pretending that we're now solely devoted to psycho-sexabilly (yuch!), or SJW-approved scream-punk (urg!), or that we're going full-RAC (whatta stretch right?!) No! We got no time for such dalliances. Oi! is supreme! Onwards to oi!

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CODI DE SILENCI – *Crucificat* EP (Lleida / Roca Sobirana): It's 2017 and skins are still being crucified! For shame society! CODI DE SILENCI is from western Catalonia and delivers a gruff and gravel throated nugget of melodic Oi! that contains notes of metallic axemanship and themes of lone wolf melancholy. This thing has us dancing around the house like the Peanuts Gang and screaming along to epic-oi! closer "Ronin": *"Ronin! Ronin! / No dues to serve, no allegiance to plead! / Ronin! Ronin! / I won't fall in to seppuku / My work remains to be done!"* All songs are sung in Catalan, but they were nice enough to include English translations of lyrics as an insert. And if you care there are three different pressings with different covers. Ooh la la.

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DUSTERS – *Demo 2016* CS (self-released): Heavy and raw 1-2, 1-2 basement Oi! The bass is way rubbery and gives a UK82 bounce to the aura. The vocals have some reverb and are delivered with sharp shouts. Lyrics are about: Racist cops, New Jersey being their home, *"Smash the right wing / It's the right thing!"*, gossip and the New York Red Bulls FC (ugh). Listen American skins, baseball is America's sport (let's go Bucs!). Not *football.* (NFL is fine.) Soccer is a game you play during P.E. in grade school or something you pick up in your late twenties / early thirties when you join a coed-recreation league to help your dating life. And it's straight wack there is a team called the New York Red Bulls (but not as wack as the Redskins). I digress, this demo is fine. Sometimes the vocalist crams too many syllables into his delivery, but instead of it sounding urgent, it sounds poorly conceptualized. But whatevs! It's a demo. They also cover "Ultra-Violence" by the OPPRESSED (the original acceptable Oi! band).

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GRADE 2 – *Heard it All Before* EP (Contra, duh): Oi!'s prancing princes are back with four new songs of polished Contra Records approved university-Oi! *Heard it All Before* kicks off with the NWOBHM dusted tune, "Take a Step Back"—a song about remembering gratitude—then moves onto the title track, which concerns itself with one-time skins offering up unsolicited tales of how it used to be. Check these girded words: *"Listen to me I don't need tales from the past / But if I did don't you think I would ask? / Let me guess you used to dress like me / Going to the youth club listening to Madness and The Beat / Don't wanna hear it / I've heard it all before."* Stand back oldos! GRADE 2 have it under control. On the B-side you get "Ticket to Ryde" about their hometown and "Cut Your Losses," a heady tune (with a word count longer than this review) about turning your life around after making poor decisions. I'm gonna hire GRADE 2 to be my life coach! I jest a bit. One look at GRADE 2's tour schedule makes plain one fact: the band works hard. Pair that work ethic with their efforts (sometimes eye-roll inducing) to buck the lyrical status quo of their contemporaries and you get a band who has firmly found a place in the upper echelons of Oi!

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HAMMER AND THE NAILS – *An Unfortunate Dispensation* LP (Disco Nightmare): Good god! This is straight sonic fire! I don't even care that this is a discog-LP. New shit would be a treat but when all of HAMMER AND THE NAILS releases are put end to end on one record—for the first time!—it showcases the power this band controls. Every song is a dirty rock'n'roll Oi! brawler, but a few standouts include "Legislation not Rehabilitation," "A Product of this Modern Age," "Sleeping Giant," "Rome is Burning," and "Icepicks." A few lines from "Icepicks": *"You gave us a reason, we gave you two more! / Your defeat is the answer to this ongoing war! What we really want is to restore the trust in defense / So we'll take you one by one until the nation is controlled again!"* How's that for American Oi! power?

An Unfortunate Dispensation is not for the faint of heart; if you are a fan of dirty cops, corrupt political machinations, victim blaming, or are against capital punishment for sexual predators HAMMER AND THE NAILS probably aint the band for you (try HAIRLONG N FREEKY, they don't sing about anything). But if you're a fan of BLACK SABBATH, '90s Nippon Oi!, and strong, intelligent lyrics, HAMMER AND THE NAILS are what you've been looking for—but if you have taste like that you're already in the know. Get it now so you can bark along! *"More legislation to stop repeat offenders / Or we will take it into our own hands!"*

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HEXEN – *Die Frauenjagd* EP (Bird Trouble / Crom / Spirit Of The Streets / Tough Ain't Enough): HEXEN are an all lady streetpunk / Oi! band from the Basque Region. The vocalist has a strong Mia Zapata vibe that made us revisit *Frenching the Bully* to make sure we weren't being lazy. It's valid. Sonically the band has a driving rock'n'roll swagger that bears comparison to mid '90s California streetpunk with its huge backing vocals and thick production. Everything is real tight on this record. And it better be with five members and four labels behind the finished product! The EP ends with the rousing workers sing-along "Love Your Way": *"Never will have it easy, not for you, working class! / You have values they'll never understand / Never will have it easy, not for you, working class! / You stand out of the pack!"* If you're not grounded from the internet, look it up. All lyrics in English. For fans of the GITS, the GYMSLIPS, and PRESSURE POINT.

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V/A – *Skinhead Clockwork* EP (Oi! The Nische): Four-way international skinhead split! The bands are FAVL (Viterbo, IT), RECONQUESTA (Catalonia), ASAS DA VINGANÇA (Faro, PT), BRONCO ARMY (São Paulo, BR), each of whom contribute one song. Things get rowdy quick with the FAVL rocker, "Tramontato Il Sole" which builds from a slow burn to a skinhead rampage with dueling guitar solos. RECONQUESTA offers up a quick skinhead hardcore attack titled, "Desperta." The recording is blown out and gives the song a demo quality. ASAS DA VINGANÇA's "Cerveja E Jack" is a deep look into the sadness and destruction that alcohol can inflict on a family...Sike! It's an Oi!-party anthem with a shouted chorus of, you guessed it, *"Cerveja E Jack! Cerveja E Jack!"* Skinheads love booooze! The boot bash ends with the raw sound of BRONCO ARMY's "Ninguém Pode Nos Julgar" ("No One Can Judge Us"). It's a tough lionhearted song that reminds us why we so enjoy Brazilian Oi!

All in *Skinhead Clockwork* is probably for Oi! aficionados only. It a great sampling of some lesser known bands from some underdog Oi!-locales but it's Europeen-only distribution makes it pretty cost prohibitive. Oof!

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Alright, that's all you nerds get! Enjoy the Oi! Be back next month!

CONTACT:

+ This is what democracy looks like! AmericanBootGang@gmail.com

FUTURO

Interview by Daniel Guimarães, Laura Lança and Carol Mags.
Photos by Marcelo Lafarina, Mateus Mondini, and Nathan Motta.

FUTURO IS A FOUR-PIECE PUNK BAND FROM SÃO PAULO, Brazil that has been active for over half a decade now. Beginning in 2010 from the ashes of a previous band called B.U.S.H., they incorporated singer Camila Leão in 2011 and since then have released a bunch of hard-hitting records filled with songs that mix garage-y guitars with punk desperation. They've recently put out their second LP Hábitos Ruins *on Dirt Cult Records in the US and Nada Nada Discos in São Paulo and will tour the States in April.*

In my opinion, Futuro is a difficult band to classify and some audiences may have a hard time comparing them to something familiar. It's very Brazilian, but neither the tropical stereotype nor the trademark Brazilian style punk à la Ratos de Porão's classic Crucificados Pelo Sistema *record. But still, if I had to explain the general feeling in the country right now to a foreigner, I'd give them a copy of* Hábitos Ruins*. It's the perfect subjective expression of life in a city like São Paulo right after millions of people have seen their vision of the future melt in front of their eyes.*

MRR: What do you all do in the band besides criticizing the system and complaining about daily life?

Mila: I sing and write lyrics.

Pedro: I come up with riffs, play them a little too loud on the guitar and talk a bit too much as well.

Bá: I play the bass. I create over the ideas Pedro brings to practice and try to play something as distinct as possible from what he's doing while still making sense.

Xopô: I've been playing drums in the band for a year and a half. I was already a big fan of the band and although my memory is too lousy even to remember the names of family members, it worked well to learn the songs and add my own peculiar twist to the songs. My job is to create links between the crazy stuff Pedro and Bá are doing and bring everyone back to earth with good old punk rock.

MRR: Speaking of it, the band has been through changes over time. And since time has a lot to do with the whole "future" thing, is transition an important element?
Pedro: Definitely. Futuro is a strange band in that even though we are our own distinct entity, we transitioned out of another band, B.U.S.H. Many bands change their name, and some split up and start a new one with a similar lineup. But we had a slow but steady transition between one band and the other. First we changed the name, and then Mila joined and transformed us into an entirely different band.
Mila: I believe transitions are crucial in any project having to do with collective work. Every participant has something to add no matter how long they've been involved. It's important that there's a healthy exchange of ideas and to reflect the current moment. People come and go as a reflection of the musical development and I see it as a positive and cyclical thing, so that the band doesn't depend on a specific formula and keeps challenging itself constantly.

The band started to change when they were still called B.U.S.H. and when they put out the last record with the old singer Kalota, they had already matured musically. Then, the first EP we recorded with me singing is very different from the other things they had released and the name change was good because it followed the change of sound. It started to sound darker and more "dramatic." I think the female voice helped us change the general sound and adapt some new ideas.
Bá: I love change. Nothing that exists is eternal, everything is transitory. So transition gives you that nice feeling of being alive. It feels like time blowing wind on your face.

MRR: Speaking of transition, how did your musical references change over the years?
Pedro: From the very beginning it's always been mostly about old punk, post-punk and early hardcore as well as '60s punk and psych. Sometimes I feel that we could be defined as L.A. in 1966 meets L.A. in 1980 meets São Paulo in the mid '80s. Like Love and the Seeds meets Black Flag and TSOL meets As Mercenárias and Inocentes. But all screwed up and turned inside out.
Mila: The fuzz guitars are reminiscent of the psychedelic '60s thing, not just foreign but Brazilian too, the tropicalia movement and so on...We've done covers of old Brazilian bands and we always talk about how interesting it is to add different elements to the basic fast hardcore formula. I think the idea is to add things that will make a difference and I also think it has a lot to do with Pedro's style of writing. He's always adding different elements to something that was originally simple. Pedro also uses a lot open chords and droning notes like in Indian music, which gives us a distinct sound.

The band also has some post-punk influences. At least I, on vocals, always try to avoid singing in a formulaic, straight manner. I'm always trying to merge some influences like Siouxsie, for instance, with the straight ahead punk thing.

MRR: Mila, what about the lyrics you've been writing lately, do you have any comments? Sometimes I listen to lyrics by current bands and find myself pathetically trying to grasp what they mean as if it was something important,

but I find out they're not saying anything. They're just nice sounding words put together without meaning. While you've done the opposite.

Mila: I think it's our perspective on issues we find important according to our political, social and geographic experience.

In the bands I had before Futuro I tended to write in a style that was more militant and direct. But when we did the first EP together I decided to break away from it and add something more personal and abstract to reflect my life at the time. The band's feel was already heading towards what we jokingly call "the abyss" and my lyrics went along with it.

Then, after the LP, on our new songs I went back to more specific and current topics to put salt on the wounds and transmit the urgency of the hard times we're going through while still being able to shift between subjective and objective language.

MRR: When I listen to the album I get the feeling of a way of life that's falling apart with few ways to escape, which are usually linked to dumb notions of happiness, family life and consumerism. There's a part of the song "Ecos" that says "*I won't doubt that we can't get worse,*" which feels a lot like the current political situation.

Pedro: I think the whole theme on *Hábitos Ruins* is the political situation in Brazil and how it's reflected on our particular lives

and our community. You can interpret it either way. Sectarianism, polarization, hopelessness and lack of meaning both nationally and in our personal and social lives, because we don't live inside a bubble. During the last fifteen years or so there was a lot of optimism in Brazil. We lived under the illusion that things were going to keep getting better. Then it all fell apart and we were able to look outside and this whole climate penetrated our experience, our dealings with friends, the punk scene, our personal lives and so on.

Mila: I wrote most of the lyrics for this record on the bus, when I was really stressed out. I'd take my phone and write what I felt. So it all came up when I was the most pissed off and pessimistic, when I didn't want to be there. Later, when we already had the songs, I would take these things I'd written, think about them with more depth and refine them into the lyrics.

MRR: So, the musical evolution of the band has influenced the lyrics. Did the lyrics influence your sound as well?

Pedro: The last song we wrote for the album, "A Última Peça," was a bit like this. We already had the other songs and I noticed that they sort of had a common thread among them. So when I wrote the music I thought of something that felt like this whole gloomy mess. And it's the most apocalyptic sounding song.

So the record has lyrics written by Mila, by Bá, and by myself. The three of us have very different way of communicating but they all fit together.

Mila: "A Última Peça" is interesting, because we wrote the lyrics together. I kept the final part which was yours and rewrote the rest following similar ideas. First in English, then in Portuguese and then changed some of it.

Pedro: It was a real partnership. This part that I wrote says "*I don't need anyone, I'm not a part of anything, I didn't ask to be in your fairytale...*" It's peculiar, because I don't totally agree with it literally. I'm obviously a part of something, and I obviously need other people. But it's true of an emotion that you feel in a particular moment where you want to tell the whole world to fuck off due to the pressure of what people expect from you, especially in this environment of vulgar, stupid politics.

Mila: This part is sick! I'm quite shy so I can't really face people when I'm onstage singing, I'm always walking sideways. But during this part I make an exception and sing looking at people's faces!

MRR: What are your lyrics about, Bá?

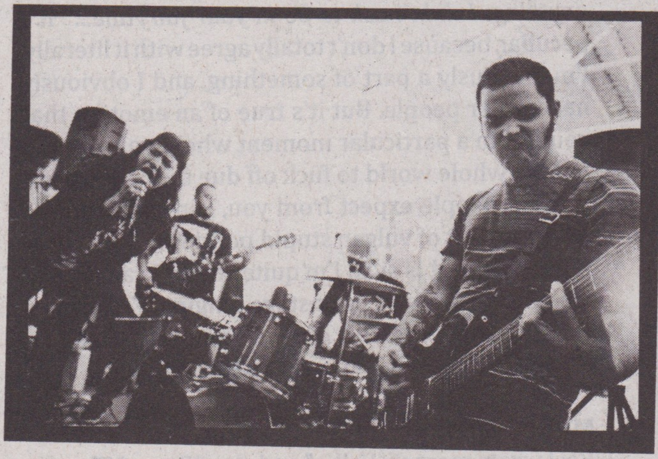
Bá: I wrote most of "Velho" and also "Ossos." They're both about the same thing, my conflict with men with guaranteed privileges who deny to admit it because they like the sensation of "winning." It's about people who treat life as a game where they accumulate things. In "Ossos" there's a part that says "*I want you to die of thirst, become a skull. I want that your money turns into sand, I'm going to kick your skeleton and make a mess out of your bones.*"

MRR: Another song I really like is "History." It sounds a little different from the rest. The songwriting is more "rockish."

Pedro: Some songs appear out of nowhere, written almost in real time while we're playing them for the first time. This one was one of them. It began

as an instrumental thing that I started playing just for fun between songs during practice. I was going for a skate rock kind of vibe, like some skate video soundtracks from the '80s or some of those crazy surf songs by JFA. It took us about four years to finish it with the vocals.

MRR: It's interesting how the whole emotion of the song changes. In the first part Pedro sings, then the song changes completely, Mila starts yelling and I need to turn the volume down. I think it fits the lyrics. The first part is kind of a manifesto, then the tone changes.
Pedro: Yes, it comes from something I was thinking—on the bus, just like Mila—after listening to a song by a São Paulo post-punk band from the early '80s called Voluntários da Pátria. The song is called "Cadê O Socialismo" ("Where's The Socialism") where they talk about the pace of history, how it's too slow. It made me think that if we destroy the separation between those who write history and those who live it, then we don't even need to write it anymore or to look at the past at all, as we'll be living it in real time. And the changes in the song are like the contradictions that history is made of are sometimes resolved in violent, turbulent ways, sometimes it arrives in a better place, but only after a long messy ride. And that's how the music goes. There's a moment of chaos and then it ends on a better place.



MRR: OK, let's get real now. How long has the album been out? Are you touring the US because of the record?
Pedro: The first version came out on tape in 2014 in Brazil and the vinyl version was released in 2016 in the US. We're touring for its own sake. We'd be lying if we said we were promoting the record. Most people who are going to see us have probably never heard of us. Like Ian MacKaye says, records should promote shows, not the other way around. So, we're touring because that's what a band should do, play music. And the cool thing about touring is that you play every day for different people, have real experiences, build memories and that's what life is all about.
Mila: Yes, and it's not just about playing. It's also about seeing other bands, meeting a bunch of cool people, to know what's cracking on the other edge of the continent...it's a different perspective on how hardcore punk scenes exist in a different social context.

Xopô: I've only toured with other people's bands. I went to Europe with Rakta and I love it how you never know what to expect. One night you play a club, the next day you play someone's kitchen. If everything just worked like expected it wouldn't be so interesting.
Bá: It's fun because it's totally "wrong" in a way. You travel thousands of miles, then drive for hours every day and when we arrive in a town, we play for fifteen minutes! I don't find it wrong, but I bet normal people do.
Pedro: Yes, people don't understand why we'd do anything that's not guaranteed to be a huge success. But that's not the point. The point is to be able to play music. And it's really hard to do it in Brazil for a number of reasons. We travel in Brazil for a few days and then come back home, because you can't do real tours here unless you're a big band. Or a foreign one. That's because people won't go out on a weekday to see a small Brazilian band.

Also, gas is really expensive and nobody has vans, so you need to rent one from a real professional expensive place, people don't have equipment, there are no basements pretty much, and so on...So booking a gig out of town ends up being a big deal, let alone a tour. It's like, everything here is twice as expensive and you make half as much money, it's much more expensive to put out a record and so on...

I think that's why people in Brazil have a different, less ambitious mentality when they start bands. They pretty much expect it to not go anywhere beyond playing a few

gigs and putting some songs online. So everything takes super long and in the end most bands don't really do anything.

MRR: I wonder how American punks will view a band that is so representative of a place like São Paulo, Brazil...

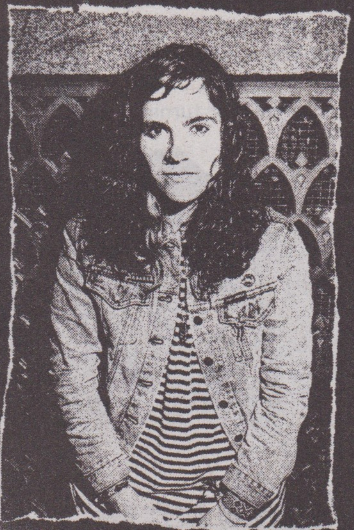
Pedro: I've always wondered if people abroad interpreted us like something particularly Brazilian. After we were interviewed by Bandcamp I noticed that some people understand it like this. But on the other hand I suppose some people abroad expect all Brazilian bands to sound like early '80s Brazilian hardcore. They want something "exotic" for lack of a better word. American bands can sound like whatever, but Brazilian bands need to sound "Brazilian"... I wonder why.

MRR: The future is real because it will happen but it's also imaginary because inside the reality of "tomorrow" there's a condition of eternal expectation where the power of imagination lies. What should we expect from the future / future right now?

Mila: I don't know about the future, every day is like a new bomb of disappointment. Last year felt like we were constantly being brought back to the past, regressing in many ways. As far as tomorrow and expectations go, I'd like to say I expect resistance but it should be a part of the present and it's been a part of the past as well. Resistance resists.

Regarding the band Futuro, we can only imagine. We don't know Futuro's future, because it's likely that some members will be moving out of town soon, but we hope to get together and play every once in a while...By definition, the future (and Futuro) has no defined end. Thus, as Olho Seco asked back in the day "haverá futuro?" ("Is there a future?")

futuro.bandcamp.com



USA Tour Dates:

Friday, April 7th: New York City
Saturday, April 8th: Washington, D.C. @ Damaged City Fest
Sunday, April 9th: Richmond, VA
Monday, April 10th: Greensboro, NC
Tuesday, April 11th: Savannah, GA
Wednesday, April 12th: Gainesville, FL
Thursday, April 13th: Miami, FL @ Churchills
Friday, April 14th: Tallahassee, FL
Saturday, April 15th: Hattisburg, MS
Sunday, April 16th: Nashville, TN
Monday, April 17th: Springfield, IL @ The Black Sheep Cafe
Tuesday, April 18th: Chicago, IL
Wednesday, April 19th: Seattle, WA @ The Cubicle w/ Newlywed
Thursday, April 20th: Olympia, WA @ Le Voyeur w/ Duzz
Friday, April 21st: Portland, OR @ Blackwater w/ The Stops, Macho Boys
Saturday, April 22nd: San Francisco, CA w/ Sterile Mind,
Sunday, April 23rd: Oakland, CA w/ Sterile Mind
Monday, April 24th: Santa Rosa w/ Sterile Mind
Tuesday, April 25th: SoCal w/ Sterile Mind
Wednesday, April 26th: SoCal w/ Sterile Mind

GENERACION

DAY 1 – JAN 6TH 2017 (LOS ANGELES)

Before tour actually starts, trouble has already begun. Our flight was scheduled to depart at 1:00 p.m., but was delayed 30 minutes. Due to the delay, we were going to miss our connecting flight. The lady at the front desk at Delta decided it would be best if she just rebooked our flight for later that night. Hopefully this is only a minor hiccup and everything is smooth sailing afterwards.

JAN 6TH 2017 – (10PM)

So, more trouble! It appears that our flights were never rebooked. Elias and Mario were able to get on the plane with no issue, but Kiwi and I apparently were supposed to depart at 1:00 p.m.. After much arguing and pleading the airline finally realized it was their fault and let us on board. We boarded 20 minutes before departure and were the last to board. We'll be arriving in the UK around 4:00 p.m., a bit late but hopefully not too late.

DAY 2, JAN 7TH 2017 (LONDON)

We arrived around 4:00 p.m. today. It took us about an hour to get through the border. We had paid for visa sponsorships prior to coming (they were only $170 for the whole band, so not too bad). We've been told that the UK is notorious for turning away bands from entering the country, so visa sponsorships were the best bet to enter the country. For the first time ever we didn't have to lie about what we were going to be doing in the country. Most times, we try to enter separately as tourists with gifts. We've also used the excuse that we've come just to record an album in the country. Regardless, it's always nerve wracking when you get detained at any border for any reason.

Once we enter the country, we begin the search for our driver, Charlie. We've never met and I have only ever talked to him thru email (once). He wasn't hard to spot though. In a sea of suits, he's the only one wearing an OI POLLOI shirt. We greet each other and then we're off. He explains to me that the show is only 20 miles from the airport, so it should take about 1 ½ hours to get there. An hour and a half to drive twenty miles! Traffic is insane and we make it to the show about one hour before doors open. I should mention that we're at this show fresh off a 10 hour plane ride. To me, it's like 11:00 a.m., but in the UK it is 7:00 p.m. The feeling of jetlag always keeps me naturally high! At the show we meet Tom Ellis. I call him Tom, but everyone else calls him Ellis. He gives us food and a case of Red Stripe beer. Time to shake off the jetlag and get this tour started! The show is a three band line-up with GS, SCRAPS, and HIGH-VIS. I had not eaten in about fifteen hours, so unfortunately, I only catch one song from HIGH-VIS, as I was stuffing my face during their set. The second band was SCRAPS, which were really high energy rock'n'roll / punk. They covered MASSHYSTERI (apparently Robert, the singer, is Swedish). After SCRAPS, GS took the stage. The show was pretty packed, easily over 100 people. Everyone went nuts and the show was amazing! Overall, a very high energy show. I definitely could not ask for a better first show.

After the show, our host Ika tells us we can either stay at her place and sleep or go to an after party. Charlie stays behind to sleep, but the rest of us go to the after party. I had a great time at the party, especially talking with Robert, the singer from SCRAPS. We talked about the differences between growing up in South Central versus growing up in Stockholm, Sweden. Let me tell ya, the differences are too numerous to mention! Though he did say that one thing that's difficult is being different there. He says Stockholm is so calm that if you are punk or go against the norm, people look down on you. I never really thought about it that way until he mentioned it. We ended the night with eating fried chicken. Regret #1 of tour!

DAY 3, JAN 8TH 2017 (NORWICH)

We awoke this morning to Elias barely walking in thru the front door. He had stayed at the party just drinking until the early morning. Legend has it that he started another band at the party and they busted out an impromptu set. There's a video of it out there on the internet, I'm sure. We depart for Norwich around noon, but not before passing by Big Ben, the London Eye, and Buckingham Palace. We arrive in Norwich around 4:00 p.m. and meet up with Jack and Stephanie, who are setting up the show and putting us up for the night. We bond immediately over early '90s and early '00s WWF matches. Turns out, we're all the same age and grew up liking the same wrestlers. We talk about how most likely all our favorite wrestlers are actually pieces of shit in real life, and then head off to the show. Norwich is a small town. It's similar to Logroño in Spain, Manizales in Colombia, or Denton in Texas. In other words, looks can be deceiving. While the streets are quiet, there are people out in the bars. Our show was in a bar called The Owl Sanctuary. It seemed like a punk / metal bar complete with a giant signed picture Lemmy from Motörhead. There was a bar on the first floor, while the show space was on the second floor. Tonight's show would only have two bands: MIDNIGHT PARASITE and GS. MIDNIGHT PARASITE was Jack's band. They were heavy, kind of like a metallic crust mixed with hardcore. I thought they were great! We went on after them and that's when I realized I had forgotten my head back

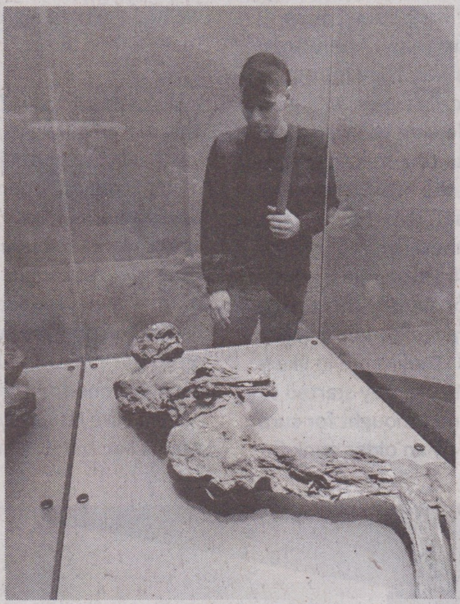
SUICIDA (UK / IRELAND TOUR 2017)

by Tony Abarca

Photos by Kiwi & Nick Gough

in London! Panic set in as I can't afford any kind of replacement. Luckily, it turns out that I just forgot it at the show space. We can pick it up before heading to the airport on Sunday.

After the show, Jack decided to take us out to another bar. We arrive at this strange somewhat fancy bar. It's warm inside and the beer is strong so I don't mind at all. We drink and then wander off into the night stumbling into the empty streets of Norwich. On our walk home, we begin to discuss Jack the Ripper. We say this must have been what it was like for his victims. The streets are empty and the alleys plentiful. You never know what lays in the dark! We arrived home about 20 minutes later, safe and intact.



DAY 4. JAN 9TH 2017 (SHEFFIELD)

Our first collective hangover of tour. Success! As we regret life choices from the night before, we realize that it is now 2:00 p.m.. We quickly shower and head out to Sheffield which is about three hours away. When we arrive in Sheffield, we meet up with Bryan who I had met the year prior when he toured the West Coast with DETERGENTS / DRY HEAVES / YOUTH AVOIDERS. The place we're playing in, The Lughole, is an awesome DIY venue. They have a giant Pig Champion banner on their wall and an iron coffin with "Lug Hole" carved into it that doubles as a light while bands play. It seems that bands practice at the space also, as I can hear them jamming before the show starts. I see several people in shorts and shirts which is nuts to me because it is freezing! We're really sticking out here in our coats and thermals.

We decide to go to the pub next door while we wait for the show to start and also to warm up. The pub is an old man pub. Everyone had gray hair or was balding and they were playing darts. They didn't seem to mind the punks though. They even had an agreement with the Lughole that punks can purchase beer there and take the glasses to the venue. The pub would just pass by later for the glasses. That's unheard of in LA! The show was great overall. The show tonight had four bands: SHITNECK, COMMUNITY, NATTERERS, and GS. SHITNECK must have played a really short set, because in the time that I drank one beer at the pub they had already finished. COMMUNITY played a raging set, and so did NATTERERS. I like the fact that most of the bands we are playing with I've never heard before, so all they are fresh to my ears. Tomorrow we take off to Ireland and we have to head to the airport at 5:00 a.m., so no after party tonight! We're all still running on adrenaline though, so here's hoping we can actually sleep.

DAY 5. JAN 10TH, 2017 (DUBLIN, IRELAND)

I woke up this morning at 3:30 a.m. Not because of an alarm, but because jetlag has kicked in full swing. To my body, it is 7:00 p.m. I decided to roll with it. We have to leave by 5:00 a.m. and the airport is an hour and a half away. I take a shower and take my time getting ready. I feel fresh as fuck! Once on the road, the sleep deprivation starts to kick in. I can't really sleep however, as I'm mesmerized by how dark and foggy the British countryside is. It's like a scene out of *Jeepers Creepers*, only darker. We make it to the loneliest airport in the world in Manchester. Security check is quick and easy and before you know it we're on a half hour flight to Dublin. Once we arrive in Dublin, we realize we have come unprepared. For one thing, they don't use pounds here, they use euros. Which is unfortunate for Elias who decided to withdraw 100 pounds before boarding the flight to Dublin. The second mistake we made was not having an address for our contact in Ireland. We were unaware that we'd be crossing another border in Ireland. That was a fun conversation to have with border patrol. I thought for sure we'd be denied entry, but we just got yelled at and eventually allowed in.

Once in, we met up with Katy who came to pick us up at the airport. The introductions were quick and brief and soon we were on our way to Megan's house. Ireland is a cold country. The wind is sharp and constant. Besides the cold weather, Ireland feels more like home. It's urban here, full of wall art and liveliness. You can tell some of the streets are rough, but the people are real as fuck. I like it a lot! We get to Megan's house and she is cooking breakfast. She says we can eat and then go check out a few sites, mainly Phil Lynott's grave, some mummies, and the bog people (which are on display at the local museum). I have to say, to see the bog people up close is pretty amazing. They look like old leather jackets with eyeballs, hair, and fingernails. Megan herself is extremely excited to see them even though she's seen them countless times before. She's really stoked to explain to us Irish history and takes us to see the Vikings exhibit as well. Afterwards she takes us to St. Michan's, an old church that has a crypt beneath it. She tells us that we're allowed to touch the mummies and it's actually considered good luck to do so. Kiwi is super stoked to touch a mummy. We get to St. Michan's and it is a guided tour into the crypt. The crypt is a hole in the ground that leads to a long tunnel. The mummies are behind a gate, so we can't touch them. We were all pretty bummed. The mummies are presumed to be religious figures: priests, nuns, etc...which is interesting enough. But the crypt next door was a bit cooler in my opinion. The guide tells us that you can't travel to Ireland without talking about rebels and they just so happen to have a few Irish rebels buried there. They have two brothers who attempted to start a revolution modeled after the French revolution in 1798. They were captured, hung, and while still alive were disemboweled and cut into four pieces in public. The notice of their death sentence is on display with their caskets. We stick around after the tour and take a few photos. Mario gets a few

blue streaks in his photos and we all joke that he is now haunted. Overall, it was an awesome little trip before the show. Afterwards, we head off to their collective DIY space for dinner. They introduce us to something called a pea float, which is basically a pie floating on top of pea soup. After dinner, the beers start flowing but we're too tired by this point and just fall asleep. We awake to a freezing room as the temperature has dropped significantly in the night. The locals don't mind however. Someone even told me that it was nice that the weather was so mild today. Mild...Once at the show, we realized we made it just in time for the first band, VENA CAVA. The venue is a two-story bar and the bands play on the second floor. For the most part, people just watched the bands play. Not much pogoing or pitting or anything like that. That is until DISGUISE played. They came in like a whirlwind and tore everything up. This one particular guy started to smack a chandelier in the middle of the room and I thought for sure it would fall on the crowd. He was scolded later by an older punk for "not respecting the fuckin' venue." Apparently there aren't many places to do punk shows in Dublin, so the punks are very protective of their spaces.

After the gig we head back to their DIY space. We spend the night playing foosball, drinking, talking about how fascism has spread in the USA and abroad and how none of us stand for any of it. We talk about the gangs in our streets and how growing up we sometimes had to roll with them just to survive because things would get rough. The people here remind me of friends back home. I was bummed when we had to leave.

DAY 6. JAN 11TH, 2017 (DURHAM)

We awoke at noon today and took a taxi back to the lonely airport in Dublin. Before we knew it we were back in the UK. Charlie picked us up at the airport and then we were off to Durham. I don't think people really understand what touring is like. You pretty much spend the majority of your day in a van. Not really the most exciting stuff. You can only talk with your bandmates for so long before you just fall asleep. That's pretty much what happened until we got to Durham. A lot of people scoffed when we said we were playing Durham, but that is totally their loss! Durham is a sick town! We arrived a bit late and missed the first band, PROLEFEED. We did catch NATTERERS, which we had also seen in Sheffield. I personally thought they killed it both times. The show space itself was kind of a maze. There were multiple stairways that lead in all kinds of directions. One leads to a café / bar, another leads to the show space. Another one leads to a kind of band hangout space and still there are other staircases that lead to places we're not allowed in to. I'm probably exaggerating about the number of staircases, but that's how I remember it. The show itself was pretty packed with people crowding the stairway leading into the showroom.

After the show, we went to buy beers and ingredients for micheladas. In our drunken haze we wanted to make some for our hosts in the morning. We did the best we could with what was available but it was nowhere near as good as it would have been if we had the right ingredients. There is no Tapatio or Tajin in the UK, so that's a fatal blow.

DAY 7 JAN 12TH, 2017 (GLASGOW, SCOTLAND)

This morning I woke up with a horrible cough. It seems the tour bug has finally got me. Charlie says if we think it's cold now, wait 'til we reach Scotland. There will be snow for sure! We head off towards Glasgow, a four hour trip from Durham. Halfway there, we pull over at a rest area to buy sandwiches and water for our trip. As we exit the store, we got caught off guard by snow. Mario and Elias are excited, as they've never seen snowfall before. Kiwi tries to catch snowflakes on her tongue. We eventually realize how cold it actually is and rush off to the van. Once in Glasgow, it appears we may have arrived a bit early. No one from the show is there, but the bar is open. The bar is named Nice N' Sleazy and it looks like its name. I'm not too sure if it's a punk bar, but it definitely had that vibe. Graffiti covers the walls and the show space is in the basement. The music ain't too bad either: It's a mix of '80s new wave and '70s punk. I grab a beer and go see the first band, PUBLIC SERVICE, soundcheck. They sound really good, like a mix of post-punk and mainstream new wave. When it comes time for them to actually play their set, the room gets packed. The crowd at this show is pretty mixed. There are hardcore guys, old street punx, and mafioso looking skinheads (the kind with suits, not suspenders). Afterwards, JOYCE DELANEY takes the stage. They have two female singers and sound like a less noisy version of VIVIAN GIRLS. They explain each song before they play it and do a lot of playful banter in between songs. Afterwards, SICK OF TALK takes the stage. They remind me of an old LA band called SICK 'EM. It was fast and furious with the singer jumping into the crowd and going nuts. We went up after them and it was real hard to hear on stage. The monitors were pretty crappy, but overall everything was fine.

After the show, they had a "club night" which was basically just one of the guys from one of the previous bands dj'ing. Holy shit, lemme tell you, after parties sure are different in the UK! Here's a rundown of the playlist: Slayer – "Raining Blood," the theme from *Seinfeld*, *The Matrix* theme song, and the HHH intro theme song. This party was crackin' though! The DJ said he'd take requests, but when Kiwi requested some songs, he said he'd get to it but he wanted to show us how Europe parties first. Fair enough! We chugged our beers then went home to sleep it off. As I'm writing this, I still have the *Mortal Kombat* theme song playing in my head...

DAY 8 JAN 13th, 2017 (SALFORD)

I woke up sick as fuck this morning. It turns out I slept near a slightly open window. As someone more use to desert weather, this cold can be brutal, more so if I'm already sick. Charlie went to go get the van while we got ourselves ready. We are five stories up and there is no elevator, so we had to carry all our stuff down five flights of stairs. Going down was way easier than going up though, that's for sure!

Today's show was in Salford, which is about one hour from Sheffield and is just outside of Manchester. On our way there, we drove past Stoke on Trent and I ask Charlie if that's the city that DISCHARGE is from. He says it is and back in the day it was all sawmills and factories. I only see it from the highway but it looks pretty rural to me, although Charlie assures me that it's not. We eventually arrive in Salford and this venue seemed kind of odd. It looked like a fancy cabin hotel next to a river. Inside everything is empty and they are bumping East Indian type music. The guy doing the show says it will get pushed back an hour, which is totally fine with us. Show's being pushed back two or three hours is normal in LA, so one hour is nothing! As the time for the show draws near, the bar remains empty. We all get the feeling this may be the one show that remains empty. Every tour has to have one, so this must be it. The guy doing the show tells us to come downstairs if we'd like to get some food. I wasn't even aware there was a downstairs...Turns out, there is a whole second bar below the first bar and this one is packed. A couple of punks from Sheffield have even made the trip.

Once the show actually starts, everyone from downstairs comes upstairs and packs the room. The first band, IRON DRUGS, was real good. I think they were supposed to be a metal band, but they sounded and looked like punks. Most of the music was mid-paced and aggressive. I wish people would have pogo'd though. Then HIPSHAKES played. They were more on the rock'n'roll side of things and the singer was full of theatrics, putting his finger in his mouth and playing his guitar real low. People really seemed to dig it and it was entertaining to watch. After them, SHEER ATTACK played. They were a metal band, but not the boring type. Think BLACK SABBATH meets punk or something in between all that. To be honest, I can't really describe them. The metalheads that were there were totally into it though. Afterwards, we hopped on stage. We've been playing 23 song sets this whole tour, but my cold had really gotten to me as I could barely get through half the set without feeling tired. After our set, we went back to mingle with the crowd. At the end of the night, I decided to get some beer from the bar to go, but my Scottish money was denied at the bar. I was ignored for the rest of the night at the bar, so we ended up heading home empty handed.

DAY 9 JAN 14TH, 2017 (OXFORD)

This is it, the last day of tour! We have to drive three hours to Oxford, then the next morning it will be two hours to London to get my guitar head, followed by one and half hours to the airport. My mistake on the first night has caused us some extra travel time. Oh well, regardless we are all stoked for tonight's show. All through tour, a lot of people have dismissed Oxford. Someone even said they'd never heard of a good show there. No matter, we were all looking forward to checking it out and seeing it firsthand. We arrive to the town and it is a small college town. The university is huge and Charlie decides to take us to the town center to sightsee, as he has some sites he wants to point out. Before heading to check them out, we hop into a tiny pub for a drink. This whole time Charlie has been a fairly quiet guy. Most people who have driven us on tour are always either trying to party with us or are very strict and on top of everything. Charlie on the other hand doesn't really say much and he'll let us sleep until 3:00 p.m. if we want (which we have done way too many times this tour). But tonight he's in a talkative mood. He tells us about all the bands he's toured with and all the UK punks he knows. He tells us about seeing GBH play all the time and how a lot of the more "legendary" UK bands are just regular local bands here. He never saw the Ramones though, so minus one punk point for that! Afterwards, we walk to the tourist spot he wanted to show us and he points out a small bridge for us. When I ask him what it is he replies, "It's just a bridge." I always like a good mystery, so I don't ask any more questions about it.

We head to the show right after. The show space is in the tiny basement of a pub. It can't possibly fit more than fifty people and the ceiling is so low that I would probably knock myself out if I attempt to pogo. What they say about Oxford turns out to be false, as the place gets mega packed all through the basement and even the exiting stairs. The sound is kind of hard to hear, mainly because it's so small and packed. I couldn't even hear the drums for one of the bands. The first band, TENTH LISTEN, was a kind of pop punk type of band. They played well and people seemed to dig it. The second band was SCRAP BRAIN. They were heavy and kind of had an anarcho-punk style. I thought it was pretty good. All in all, the show had a mix of styles. The guy doing the show says he doesn't care what style the bands play as long as they have DIY ethics. Overall, Oxford was awesome and it was a good finale for the tour.

DAY 10 JAN 15TH, 2017 (THE RETURN)

It took us about four hours total to get to the airport this morning. Most of us are tired, but no one's really excited about returning. Tours are often bitter/sweet like this. We miss some things from home, but to me home just never really feels like home to me. I'm not sure if I'd know how to explain it in writing. Oh well, we're stoked for when we can get on the road again. To all my punk familia and new comrades I have made on this trip, I miss you already!

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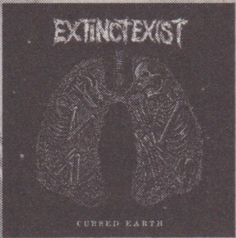

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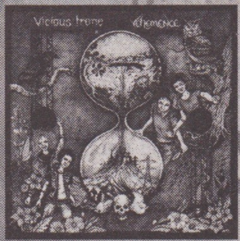

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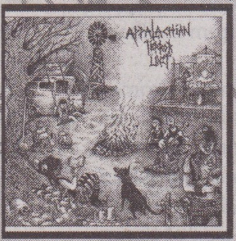

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OHYDA

"The music we play isn't very popular amongst Polish punks"

Lublin's Ohyda is one of the best contemporary hardcore / punk bands from Poland. They play hardcore with lots of effects thrown in, mostly mid tempo, but in a sublime way, so even fans of harsh, raw punk should enjoy it! The band consists of people known from other bands like Alert! Alert!, Knife in the Leg and Chorygen. The interview is gonna be about life, the band, records, and as usual, about punk. It was conducted the morning after their show in Gdynia on the 26th of November 2016. Hungover answers by: Mike (guitar), Olo (vocals), Miłosz (bass) and Kamil (drums).

Interview by Janek.
Photos provided by Olga, xRobax, and Wojtek Brzozsis.

MRR: Your music brings a dose of freshness, rarely heard in hardcore / punk. You're not the first punk band to use a chorus or flanger pedal, but I don't recall bands using them the way you do. Where did the idea to do so come from?
Mike: The idea has been stuck in my head for a while. It came to life with the right people at the right time. In our previous band Alert! Alert! (the last lineup consisted of everyone except Kamil) we started experimenting with effect pedals on the second EP, but not as boldly as we do with Ohyda.

MRR: What made you use effect pedals not as an addition to the bands sound, but an integral part of it? I guess it came from your love of post-punk?
Mike: Yeah, post punk is also an inspiration for us. Maybe not the main one, but it's there. I guess that even the Dead Kennedys's "sneaking" surf rock solos are an inspiration. I listen to all kinds of music, different genres, not only hardcore / punk. There's many inspirations, some of which we're probably not aware of ourselves.
Olo: Destino Final were definitely the biggest influence to start using a delay pedal for vocals.

MRR: Except the already mentioned Alert! Alert!, what other bands were you guys part of? I know some of you played in Knife in the Leg. When are you gonna release the promised last EP?
Kamil: The EP will come out sometime in 2017. I played drums in In Vitro, for a while in Desperate Times, the Union, nowadays in Prisoners By Choice and Blind Eye. Briefly I was also the drummer of Heatseeker (check them out!), Cold and a few non-punk bands there's no point mentioning. Miłosz plays table football and bike polo. Olo played bass in Chorygen and 45 Revolutions Per Minute.
Miłosz: Like Kamil mentioned, I play table football and am a member of local bike polo team. When I was younger I played with some friends in a garage band, nothing serious though. Alert! Alert! was my first "serious" band.

Mike: Me and Kamil go way back. It all started when he replaced the former drummer in Knife in the Leg. He already mentioned that we used to play in the Union; nowadays we also play together in Prisoners By Choice and Blind Eye. I used to play in The Bold and the Beautiful (split 12" w/ Tunguska era) and some other bands that only played a show or a few and never released anything, so nothing worth mentioning. Back to the Knife in the Leg question—don't know when will we disband. Probably after playing some last shows when we release the last EP.

MRR: Have you ever thought about playing some Alert! Alert! songs? Or you don't because you want to cut yourself off from your previous band?

Olo: We do play one song called "Umarli." It's a song that we wrote during A!A! times.

Mike: But we never recorded it before disbanding A!A!, so we adopted it with Ohyda. Same with "Szczury" (Tragiedia cover), we also played it during A!A! times.

Olo: So Ohyda in a way is a continuation of A!A! And we're not trying to distance ourselves from our past in A!A! in any way.

Mike: But it's sort of a new chapter.

MRR: How did you come up with the idea to form a long distance band? Some of you live almost 200 miles apart!

Mike: Once again we'd have to go back to A!A! times.

Olo: I just used to visit Lublin a lot.

Mike: Maybe we won't mention the reasons. *[laughs]*

Olo: I really don't know what's so funny about it?

Mike: You just really liked the company of Lublin punks, especially the women!

Olo: Well, OK…but we met before that! I used to travel to see gigs almost ten years before (or even more) and one day you just asked if I want to come to a band practice you had with the girls.

Mike: To be exact it was the girls who first invited me to the band practice!

Olo: And that's the story of Alert! Alert! and Ohyda! Nowadays I just travel to Lublin for band reasons.

MRR: Olo, what's your favorite literature? You write such sophisticated lyrics. Metaphors give them double meaning, both of which are accurate. Let the chorus of "Wybory" ("Elections") be our example: *"Only morons sign with an X."*

Olo: The problem is that recently I don't read much. I don't think that literature is an inspiration, although subconsciously it might be. If I had to give some names I'd choose Orwell and Huxley or other futuristic political fiction literature. But I don't think it's the main inspiration…

MRR: Talking about elections—do you guys vote?

Olo: So far I never took part in elections and I never voted. I never saw sense in it and never found any political representative I'd trust 100%. Before the political situation in Poland wasn't as bad. I don't know what the future will bring, because everyday we realize more and more that the right wing rises in power and stopped fucking about. That has an influence on our lives and what's going around us. I never voted so far and there's no one I could vote for, but I don't know what will I do in the next elections.

Mike: Once in a while I would go just to give an invalid vote. And just like Olo I'm not sure what will I do next time. Maybe I'll vote against the ruling party, just to give the left a chance? The different factions on the right mobilized and voted for one party. I don't have a representative in any political party. Although being somewhat disillusioned I still sympathize with anarchism, but I'm also pretty sure that there's no anarchist revolution coming anytime soon. But this election showed me that political parties can have a big affect on my life. I was naïve enough to think that even if PIS (the ruling party) wins they'll be a more "catholic" version of the previous one, PO. But instead we have a comeback of authoritarian rules like during communist times in

Poland, but with a right wing twist. Same level of propaganda, although they haven't started to arrest or kill the opposition yet. Before the ruling parties—never mind if they came from the left or right—didn't affect my life. Depending on where the political situation in Poland takes us, I might vote against next time.
Miłosz: I never voted and I don't plan to. I refuse to choose the "lesser evil." Power is power, never mind if it comes from the left or right. In the end it's always the same scenario: all the elections promises go down the drain and the ruling party only cares about gaining more and more profit for themselves and to stay in power as long as possible. If we want to change reality or fight the nationalist right wing then voting isn't the way to go. There are better, more effective methods than that.
Kamil: I, on the other hand, vote and I have never had a problem with it. Not voting and complaining makes me angry. So does the right wing government in power, which does a lot of evil and doesn't care about the voice of protesters. In the end it's mostly people with more or less right wing views that vote. They can mobilize and choose people in power who I'm ashamed of. Just like Olo I think that there's no one to vote for really, so it's not like I'm not feeling any guilt for voting. But I prefer to do it and not feel bitter that I could have changed the election results, but I didn't. I really hope that until next elections Robert Biedroń (one of the few openly gay politicians in Poland, a leftist) decides to run for president, or at least someone in his league.

MRR: Olo, so what's your favorite Orwell book besides *1984?* It seems your lyrics are heavily inspired by his works. Who's your favorite lyricist from the Polish hardcore / punk scene?
Olo: The problem is I've never read anything except *Animal Farm* and 1984.

MRR: So the choice is obvious?
Olo: I guess if we exclude *1984* there's none left. I won't hide the fact that my biggest inspiration and best Polish hardcore / punk lyricist is Amoniak from Tragiedia.
Mike: I though it's Grabaż from Pidżama Porno. [*laughs*]

MRR: The lyrics of "Bunt" (Rebellion) seem to be inspired by the current political situation in Poland where the extreme right wing that is rising in power sets people against each other so they won't fight against the government. Did I interpret your words well?
Olo: Yeah, but you'd have to add the Catholic Church into the mix and the fact that due to its power and reach the church collaborates with the new government. It gives them blessing and absolution. That's what I meant, the alliance, the mirage of right wing government and church combined, the perfect mix for manipulation and gaining more support amongst the sheep. The church has basically become a political propaganda machine. The church has chosen the side of the ruling party by supporting it. But to be honest, the church has always functioned well with the people in power, they always found a way to get along regardless which political option was in power at the time. What I basically think is that Poland is occupied by the Vatican—they're the ones who dictate the terms and politics in this country.
Mike: Give 'em some time and they'll move the capital from Warszawa to Toruń (the city where the biggest Catholic media empire—"Radio Maryja"—comes from).
Olo: Orders come from the outside.
Mike: That's a great idea for a song!

MRR: I know you guys like some old Polish punk bands. Please share some names for the American punks, especially those less popular ones that American audiences most probably haven't heard of.
Mike: It'll be the easiest to check out Tragiedia, whose 12" was released by Todo Destruido. Some of our inspiration also came from a lesser known band called Atak. It was an '80s band from Gliwice and they also used a delay effect for vocals, which made them quite unique amongst other Polish punk bands of that time. Other bands worth checking out would be Insekty Na Jajach, Nadzór, Destruktor, although from what I've heard recently the members are right wing, born-again Catholics nowadays.

MRR: It's the same with some members of Insekty Na Jajach.
Mike: Even worse, the vocalist became a Nazi skinhead as far as I've heard. If this interview will be read by someone who never dug into the Polish '80s HC / punk scene, here's some names worth checking out: Moskwa, Abaddon, Dezerter, Siekiera, Armia, KSU, Brygada Kryzys. Some of those bands changed style or left the punk scene in later years.

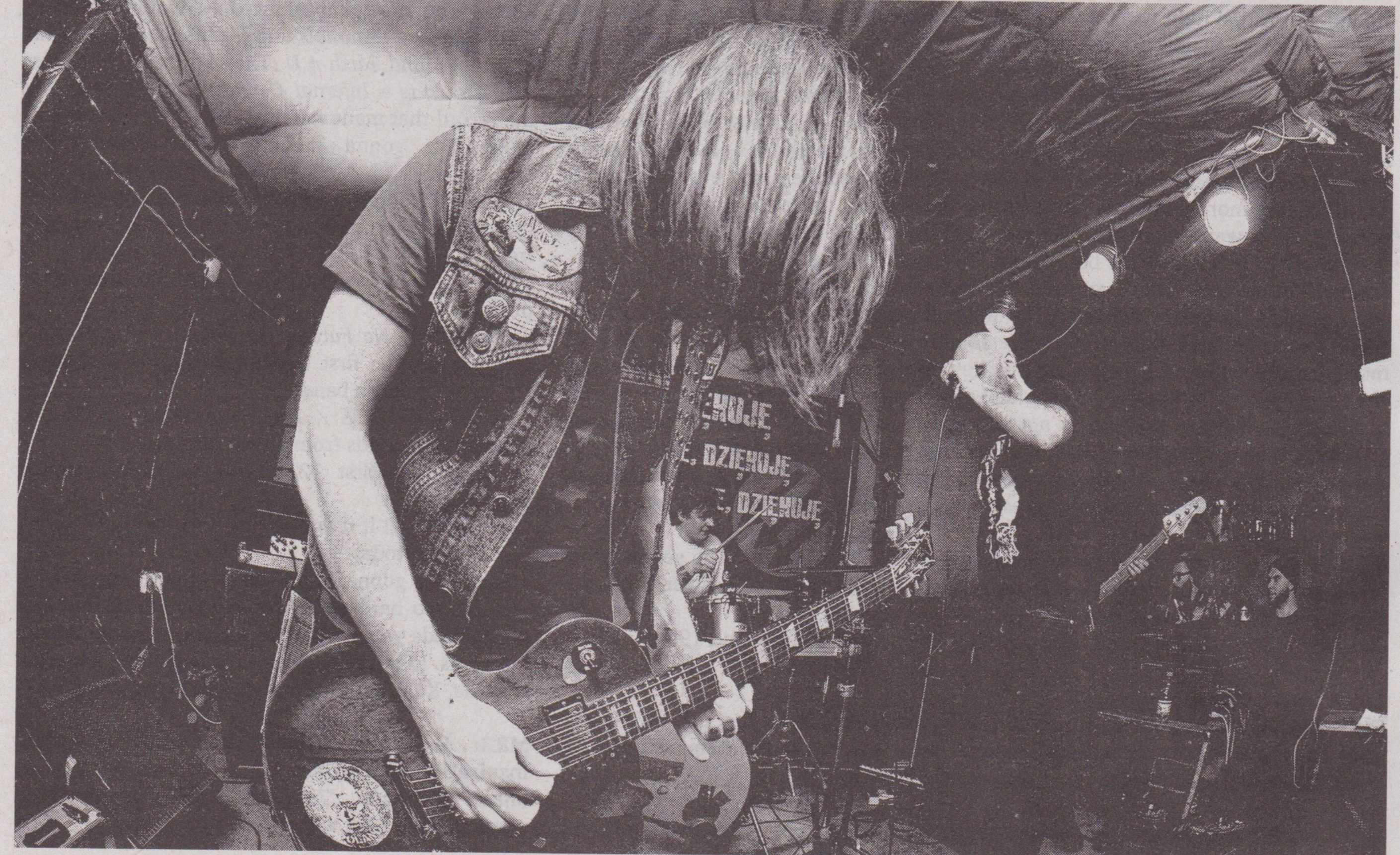
MRR: Name the five most important records in your life.
Kamil: The most important ones would definitely be Pink Floyd – *Animals* and Misfits *Static Age, Walk Among Us, and Earth A.D.* Then I'd probably choose Acid Drinkers – *Infernal Connection* because it was the record that made me consider playing drums.
Mike: I'm gonna mention some life-changing milestones.
1. Guns 'N Roses – *Appetite for Destruction.* This was the record that pulled me into a music listening freak.
2. Nirvana – *Nevermind.* A step closer to discovering punk.
3. Defiance – *No Future, No Hope,* next to Cress – *Monuments.* The first true punk records that made me want to start a band.
4. V/A – *P.E.A.C.E / War.* This record made me interested in bands from all over the world.
5. Dropdead's first 12". The lyrics made me go vegetarian.
Olo: Włochaty! If it weren't for that band I wouldn't be who I am today.
Miłosz: I'm gonna name some bands, not specific records, too hard to choose exactly which one. But these bands were a part of my life in some crucial moments. In random order: Post Regiment, Dezerter, Nirvana, Kult (early), Kazik (when I was younger).

MRR: Musically what's the most non-punk inspiration for Ohyda?
Mike: I dunno...'70s psychedelic rock? They experimented a lot with effects too I guess.

MRR: What about the biggest inspirations?
Mike: Most certainly Destino Final. Another big one was wSzaniec. During a rough time in my life I kinda accidentally attended their debut show at Elba Squat in Warszawa. I was more interested in drinking my sorrow away at the bar rather than watching bands, but suddenly they started playing and it blew me away! They fucked around with noise and used lots of effect pedals. Except these two I guess there's lots of bands we're inspired by. Impalers, S.H.I.T., Hoax are some contemporary names that we all like...
Kamil: My biggest inspiration is a rock and a stick and hitting the rock with a stick as hard as possible.
Olo: Lyricwise I guess it's newspaper headlines and all the bullshit spread by so called "authorities."

MRR: What's the least punk thing in your life?
Miłosz: Work!
Kamil: I go to work and pay taxes.
Olo: Definitely working for the Babylon...
Mike: What everyone said...and I work at a medical university and although I have nothing in common with it I know that there's some animal testing done here and it's something that bugs me.

MRR: Mike, would you mind telling the story how you broke your guitar neck? I can imagine that can happen while playing live, but during recording in the studio?
Mike: Ha! You can even hear this incident on our record! It's the explosive sound in the intro to "Szczury." I bent the guitar neck to modulate the sound and the straplock broke into pieces which resulted in catapulting the guitar straight into the studio sofa's armrest. Fortunately Chudy, who recorded us had



some of his personal guitars in the studio so I had instruments to choose from to finish recording. Luckily the neck wasn't badly broken so it's glued back together and I still use that guitar.

MRR: Mike, tell us about your Finnish episode. Is it the reason why you love Scandinavian hardcore / punk so much?
Mike: I lived in Finland between '90 and '92. My first two years of primary school. Then I had no idea I was living in the Finnish capital of punk, Tampere. I do remember the punks though—they were everywhere, decked in studded leather jackets, mohawks, dyed hair. The way they looked was very impressive, although I didn't have a clue who they were and what it was all about. Although I do think that me living abroad for two years made me interested in worldwide punk and the fact that I focus on listening to foreign bands rather than Polish ones. Unfortunately most Polish bands lack something that would make me get hooked into them.

MRR: I must agree that somehow most Polish bands aren't that good, especially today when most bands play some form of emo or "neo-crust."
Mike: I have a theory that the Polish scene's taste got fucked because of post-metal and…

MRR: Modern hardcore?
Mike: That too…

MRR: Neo-crust?
Mike: Yeah…

MRR: Emo? (And I don't mean Fugazi…)
Kamil: Fuck off!
Miłosz: Emo is alright!
Mike: As you can see two members disagree. [*laughs*]

MRR: Then you have to get rid of them!
Mike: Well, I'm not a fan, but I'd probably find some exceptions—the first thing that comes to mind is the first Dag Nasty 12". Being a younger punk I also listened to some Ebullition Records bands like Orchid or Reversal of Man. Back then you'd listen to everything new. Before internet times I ordered distro catalogues from Trująca Fala or Nikt Nic Nie Wie, I read record reviews in *Mać Pariadka* and then ordered what sounded like something cool. That's how my musical taste evolved.

MRR: I heard that you started playing guitar by accident? First you were a bass player? I think you have some outstanding guitar skills for a guitarist by accident. Tell us the story.
Mike: My inner modesty won't let me agree with you. I'm a long way from Randy Uchida and my goal is far on the horizon. My grandma lived in Chicago and after seventeen years (living there illegally for the most part) she decided to come back. She called me and asked if I want some present and I instantly thought of having a better bass guitar, a Fender Precision I dreamed of. I told her everything about it—the type of wood, even the color. But instead my grandma brought me a Fender Stratocaster guitar. The color matched though! That's how I got stuck with a guitar.
Kamil: You fucked up so bad that you sold it.
Mike: Yeah, I regret it a lot.

MRR: The scene in Lublin is one of the oldest and used to be one of the most productive ones in Poland. Where did the downfall come from? Tell us about the best years of your local scene. The same happened to the scene in Łódź. Olo, could you tell us how you viewed the best years in the Łódź scene?

Kamil: Everyone moved out. That's the main reason.
Miłosz: Most people who were part of the scene or part of collectives moved out to other cities. But in my opinion it's not the main reason for the downfall. Unfortunately the scene grew old, some "grew up" spending more time on work or personal life (that's what I hear as excuses, though I think it's possible to find time for all of the above). After some conversations I have the feeling that some folks just got bored. I kept hearing stuff like "we've heard it all before," "been there, done that" etc. There's been a feeling of stagnation for quite a while. I personally seek the reason of the downfall in losing both DIY venues we ran. We lost a place for gigs, meetings, exhibitions. That's where everybody met and sometimes something constructive was born there. There was a feeling of togetherness. Now it's gone. Another thing is there's no young punks wanting to do something constructive. Add some personal conflicts to the mix and you have a recipe for disaster.
Olo: I moved to Łódź in 2000, when the scene already was half dead so I wasn't a witness of the best years of that scene. Until the C4 club and the squat on Węglowa street existed, until bands like Homomilitia, Disable and Lost kept playing then the scene was alive (at least musically). But after that most punks moved out of Łódź to run away from poverty and there was no one new in their place, there was no new blood, no fresh ideas so it slowly came to rot. And that's how it still is nowadays. Except few folks who still try to keep things alive.
Mike: In my opinion the best years of Lublin scene were in the early 2000s. Of course I can't really say much about the earlier years because I started my punk adventure in '97 but didn't attend a show until '99. After 2000 the scene gained lots of fresh blood, lots of punks came to Lublin to study. Pączkarnia was the first DIY venue, then Tektura and there were lots of shows packed with people. Lublin was a regular point on the map for touring bands. There were about 30 bands in Lublin, Puławy and Kurów. Now there's less than half of that number. There's a visible lack of people. Young punks don't care or quickly move away to bigger cities. But it's not only a local problem, punk became a movement of bigger cities. Smaller cities aren't attractive to the youth anymore. You finish school and there's no job for you, so you move out to a bigger city. It's very visible when you see where gigs are held nowadays: Warszawa, Poznań, Gdynia / Gdańsk…

MRR: …Wrocław, Katowice.
Olo: I wouldn't be so sure with Wrocław.
Mike: Maybe it's not what it used to be, but they organize gigs pretty regularly. The exception is Toruń—the strongest scene if you consider the amount of youth and fresh blood in the scene.

MRR: Beyond the the mentioned cities gigs in Poland are organized with lesser regularity in Ciechanów, Olsztyn and Bielsko Biała. But let's go back to the band. You started one and a half year ago, you recorded one MLP and played some gigs (one abroad), did a mini tour with Life Fucker. Where's the shortage of activity coming from?
Kamil: What the fuck are you talking about?
Mike: Want to get punched in the face?!
Olo: Where are these insinuations coming from? I wouldn't call it a shortage in activity. The times where you could play somewhere every week are over. Just like we said, there aren't many cities where you can play anymore. Also we're not as young as we used to be—some of us have to save up time for other bands too. Everyone except Miłosz.
Miłosz: I take part in bike polo tournaments. There's other stuff to do except play in bands you know…
Olo: Compared to other bands I think we're not doing that bad.
Kamil: We counted gigs we played with Mike this year and it was twenty-seven. I think it's quite a lot.
Mike: Especially comparing to only seven gigs I played the year before.
Miłosz: But now you guys are talking about gigs played with all bands you play in, not only Ohyda.
Mike: You're right. With Ohyda we played twenty gigs so far.
Kamil: I guess it's not that bad for one and a half years existence.
Olo: Especially since we haven't really toured yet. We mostly played weekend gigs.
Mike: Yesterday our record officially came out. So far we postponed touring, because it's cool to tour with a record to sell, not only shirts.
Olo: To be honest we don't really get many gig propositions, so it's not that we're picky.
Mike: I think the music we play isn't very popular amongst Polish punks. That's why we're mostly playing in the same cities.
Olo: BUT WE HOPE THIS CHANGES, AMERICA!

MRR: You recently played in Dublin, Ireland. So far it was your first abroad gig. How did Irish punks react to your show?
Olo: We don't know. It was mostly Polish punks in the crowd.
Mike: Not an exaggeration, the Polish punks were maybe 2/3 of the audience.
Olo: The gig was organized by Polish punks.
Mike: Members of Disguise and Grit were amongst the audience. We also shared the stage with two Irish bands: Cyborg A.D. and Vena Cava.
Miłosz: Both the crowd and organizers gave us a good welcome. Thank you, Rudy!

MRR: Name the bands you enjoyed playing with the most.
All: LIFE FUCKER!
Olo: Definitely.
Mike: I also enjoyed Vena Cava and Dawn of Humans was fun to watch.
Olo: And Piss. We played our debut shows with them.

MRR: Your MLP was released by La Vida Es Un Mus (and before co-released on tape with N.I.C. Records). I think you're the first Polish band to be released by LVEUM. How did you manage to grab their interest?
Mike: We'd have to go back to the already mentioned gig we played with Dawn of Humans. It was our third gig ever and Paco was their roadie. Next morning Karol (high five!) invited the bands for breakfast. During conversation Paco mentioned he enjoyed our gig and told me to send him a recording if we ever do one. He never promised anything. After half a year from sending him the finished recording he offered to release us. It was a typical "in the right place and time" story. It couldn't have ended better.

MRR: How do you see the future of the band?
Kamil: Shit.
Mike: I think there's still room for evolving. We released a record, we're working on new songs, I hope we're gonna tour outside of Poland and that our name becomes familiar amongst the international punk community so we get more gig invitations from abroad.
Miłosz: Moving forward! Writing material for another record and touring somewhere far away and never coming back.
Mike: USA, Japan, Australia would be cool to visit.
Kamil: One way tickets only!
Olo: In Poland I think we've only got Kraków and Wrocław left to play in.

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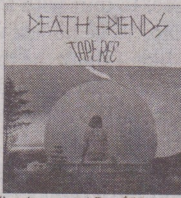

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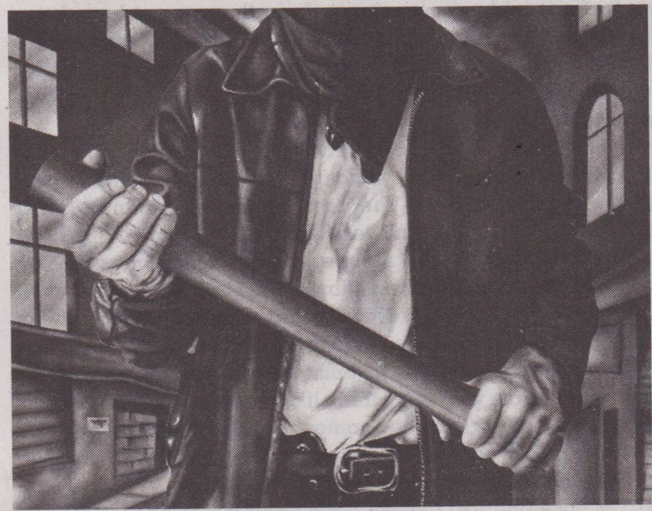
ULTRA

Barcelona has long been a hotbed for new and exciting punk and hardcore bands, and one of the city's newest ensembles, Ultra, is no exception. Featuring members of Anarquía Vertical, XM2, Nueva Fuerza, and Absurdo among others, Ultra play fast and spitting hardcore. Imagine a cross-section of fiery Spanish and Italian punk, and stripped-down, no bullshit early USHC, all backed by a high-energy delivery. With one EP under their belt and another on the way, they embark on their first US tour this spring. We checked in with them to find out what makes them tick.

Interview by Lydia Athanasopoulou. Photos by David Garcerán of the Ultra European tour..



MRR: You are based in Barcelona and all of you have also been in other bands. Is there something specifically different you want to do with Ultra? What does each of you bring to the band?

Ian: I'm the moron who sings, jumps and pushes people. The main target for spitting on, if you know what I'm talking about. Ultra is slightly more immediate than other bands I have been in. We want things and we want them soon, so we go for them.

David: I'm the fake bassist. In my case I haven't been that many years in bands (only two or three), but I share Ian's idea that Ultra is a band to really do all the things you used to talk about with other bands.

Frutos: Ultra has a super quick rhythm of activity. We have only been playing for just over a year, but I feel that we've done a lot of things. I suppose that this is related with the fact that we share a similar vibe about how a band must be managed. I'm the guitarist.

Xavi: I play drums. As David said, I've been playing in bands three or four years only, but with Ultra it's all faster. We have done one European tour with only one EP.

MRR: What kind of involvement do you all have in the Barcelona scene? Some of you have been active for a while now. Do you feel like cynical, second-generation veterans, or are you still excited with the potential?

Ian: Now I'm not involved at all. I spend months out of the city, so I go to as many shows as I can when I'm there, and help friends with organizing shows or helping with the door, cleaning, sound, but not properly involved. I'm both; a cynical grumpy veteran who complains about the lazy young kids, but I'm still excited as well, every new band, squat, project—it kicks in my guts wanting to surrender my life to the punk scene.

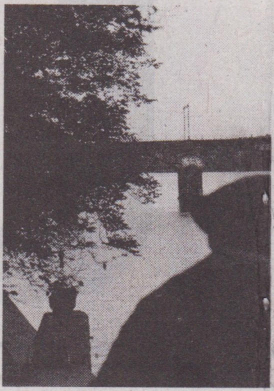
David: I go to shows every time I can, I participate sometimes in other activities that are in the orbit of the punk scene, and I play in three bands (Ultra, Anarquía Vertical and Nueva Fuerza). I'm also going to organize a couple of shows soon, but I don't think I will keep doing that. I'm not a veteran, but I also complain a lot.

Frutos: We are not veterans. Veterans were Lemmy or Fred Cole, not us. I love punk but I'm not very interested in what is happening nowadays in the Barcelona punk scene. In fact, not much has been done in recent times. Anyway, I have been doing this punk fest, MDA, for the last three years, and I'm recording bands at La Cova, a studio set up by the Una Bèstia Incontrolable guys. We have done Chroma's LP and some stuff for bands that I really like, like Anarquía Vertical, Venganza, and Rakta.

Xavi: I think that I'm not that involved in the scene like other people, but I go to all the shows I can, and play in the same bands as David. It's a bit boring now; all the people have seen the same bands over the years. Frutos is a cynical veteran, by the way.

MRR: How have you seen things change over the years? What are some noteworthy bands, projects, collectives, etc.?

Ian: Nowadays it seems that some things have faded away. The political implications of punk in general are way less than they use to be. There are fewer shows, and more and more of them are happening in



places that have less to do with punk. People put less care into the content and more into the design. Don't get me wrong, there are some pretty sick designs coming out—but is this really the punk that saw us grow? Not me. A middle finger with a circled A on each side, all roughly drawn by pen, or a few knives with the the word *jodeles* (fuck them) are some of the covers I like the most; with good content on the record and a great attitude to back it. I feel things are more and more shallow nowadays, and that people like more to be in the picture than in the mud, building an actual alternative to what is being given. But I guess talk is easy, isn't it?
David: With the guys from Nueva Fuerza (where I sing), we have been the "new kids" since we started going to shows. The lack of new, young people is really notable, and it's sad that a city like Barcelona hasn't been able to convince some young kids that punk is better than trap or indie rock. I'm excited to see what can be done inside La Cova, a space where I recorded many times with Frutos (the Ultra EP was recorded there) that is now organizing events. I really like Lux and Nadie, and I think Pesadilla are going to be one of the best bands of this year.
Frutos: Pesadilla was fucking great but, if I'm not wrong, I think they split up.
Xavi: Same as David.

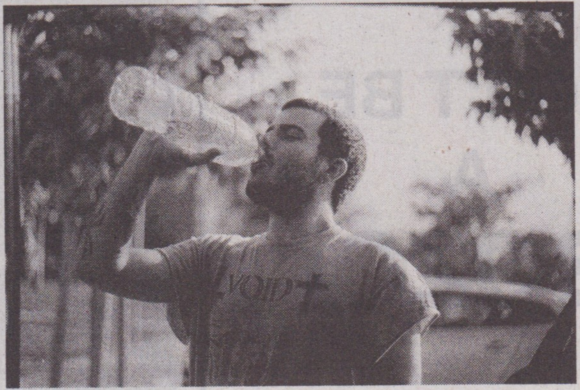
MRR: It sounds like Ultra is political in nature, or at least politically-oriented. How connected are these ideas to schools of thought or punk, from the past in Spain or otherwise? Is it just music?
Ian: Are we? I don't know, I suppose in some ways, and of course some are more than others. Spain has a strong recent political history, and I suppose that punk was raised on it—especially anarchism, that has been feeding punk since the civil war and in the post-war era—although this is only part of what feeds us. The daily bases of politics in Spain are quite rough. There are often raids in houses and social centers, with friends getting arrested, some facing heavy charges. There are anarchists in prison for the simple reason of having been involved in anarchism. Our squats, social centers where we do things, and our homes where we live are constantly getting evicted. The migrant prisons are overflowing and the immigration policies are disgusting for a self-declared "progressive" country...

I could keep going, but what I aim to say is that this reoccurring, oppressive daily routine imposed by the wild, modern capitalist system we live in is what feeds our anger, our discomfort with the status quo. The stupidity they want to sell us, the perfect advert bodies, the study-work-buy bullshit, the racist and sexist approach to every single aspect of what they offer, the militarized police controlling the trains, bus stations, and airports, the mouths full of shit of politicians who say they are on our side, the millions of animals dying for no fucking reason...This feeds our anger.

What was the reality of the bands from the '80s in Spain? I don't know. Probably rough as well, for sure different. I'm not saying worse or better, and we of course have learned from it and been fed and fueled by it. But I think, not forgetting or forgiving the past, that our tables, so as to speak, in the present have been properly laid out for us to be able to fight back. I suppose it's not simply music, no. But Ultra is definitely not a full-on political band; we talk about our life, our relationships, and we try to have a good time together.
David: I think that the music I'm involved in is political, so it's not just music, but as Ian says, you can't compare the '80s in Spain with the reality in 2017. [The present scene] continues what started in the '80s, but it isn't very similar.
Frutos: Ultra doesn't have a super clear political message. In fact, our lyrics are more a rejection of the state of things, that an affirmation of any ideology. No nihilistic, violent or macho shit in our message. Ian and I have been involved in some autonomous and anarchist projects but fortunately we are still able to do things with people who don't think like us. As a band, we discuss politics a lot and we have had some arguments, but it's cool—it's not very exciting to be in a project where everybody has the same fucking opinions.
Xavi: I'm not a political person, I don't give a shit. As they said, in Spain we have a similar situation to the '80s so...

MRR: What does a typical Barcelona show look like? Barcelona definitely seems to get the spotlight. What is happening in other parts of Spain?
Ian: Barcelona gets the spotlight, for sure, if I get the right concept of the word. Although people should look beyond this spotlight, because there is some really interesting shit going on in places like Mallorca, Zaragoza, Euzkadi (Basque Country), Madrid, Asturies. The Iberian Peninsula is quite rich in punk bands and scenes.
David: Punk shows here tend to be boring, to be honest. I wish it were different! Only during fests, or when some bands from other cities come, it changes a bit. There are people at most of the shows, but everybody is just standing there, drinking a beer and that's all. I can't say too much about other cities, I think there are some great bands in Spain.
Xavi: Boring, except when there are many drunk people. They don't care about the music, so they slam every time and everywhere.

MRR: You obviously have classic Spanish punk and hardcore down, and it sounds like you enjoy classic USHC. What other sounds or genres inspire or appeal to you?
Ian: Ugh, hummm...Do I have to be honest? Well, as much as I love the most dirty and rough punk, Italian hardcore from the '80s, Spanish punk and hardcore from the '80s, Scandinavian rough punk, classic USHC, I listen to *a lot* of really commercial pop



music. Yes, the really bad ones. Rihanna, Taylor Swift, Lady Gaga, Katy Perry, Kesha. Yes, I know, but they get me in a good mood to get shit done, and I like to be productive with my projects.
David: I don't know if it inspires me a lot in the music of Ultra, but I've been listening to a lot of classical music and flamenco lately.
Frutos: During the last months I have been listening to rock Andaluz and this shit called *Nuevo Flamenco*: Triana, [Enrique] Morente, Mezquita, Lole y Manuel, Smash, etc. Ultra has a mystic side and these kinds of bands really focus on that, so I suppose that they are an influence on us. Fuck USHC, I prefer Eskorbuto and La Polla Records.
Xavi: I'm tired of punk now. I passed to the dark side and I listen a lot of '80s and '90s indie rock.

MRR: Ian, you're a sea shepherd and gone for months at a time. How does that work with also doing a band? What else do you all do besides making punk?
Ian: Beside punk I do enjoy mountaineering a lot, and I try to do as many hikes, climbs and other mountain shit as I can, every time going higher and harder. Yes, I do spend months out of town being a sea shepherd. Since June 2013 I have spent over twenty months between sea and ports during a few different periods. This is probably one of the main reasons Absurdo died. After almost ten months away, I came back and everyone had their own projects and different interests besides the band. Energies were put into other things during the time I was away. We gave it a push, but then I left for another five months…It was dead after that. I hope the Ultra kids don't get burned out on me, ha ha ha.
David: When Ian isn't here we keep practicing! I like to read a lot, play classical guitar, go to museums…I'm a software developer so when I'm at home I try to not turn on my computer. I also take a lot of pictures! But who doesn't in this era?
Frutos: I'm writing and reading shit all the time, and I love to exercise and do sports: boxing, swimming, etc. Now I have some problems with my ribs but I will strike back. Also, I'm involved in the assembly of La Cinetika, a cinema that we squatted a year ago. If you come to Barcelona you must visit us, this place is great.

MRR: What are you excited about with this US tour? Anything you are not particularly looking forward to?
Ian: I suppose the same as any other tour: I expect to have fun with my friends and bandmates, to enjoy different scenes, meet new people, discover amazing bands, hang out with old friends and get to play with their bands, eat good food. So the good things of a tour! I'm not looking forward to the potential bad things of any tour, like having issues with the van, not being fed in some places, having trouble with dickheads (there are always some), losing money (not that I aim to get any, but you know…), not being fed (did I said this already?), stinky smells in the van…
David: I want to go shooting. Also I'm going to spend a week in New York, so I'm excited to visit the city and relax before the long month-and-a-half of tour starts.
Frutos: I don't want to see David shoot anything, I swear. Anyway, I'm really excited to see some friends again that I haven't seen since the Absurdo US tour in 2013. I love playing, we have a lot of dates and the roads in the US are really nice—compared to Spain—so it will be a great trip. Also, Ian and I will be in New York some days before the tour, so I expect we will join some demonstrations against the new president.

MRR: Your first EP is out now on La Vida Es Un Mus. What are the next steps?
Ian: Another 7" is on its way. This US tour in April and May, maybe a Scandinavian tour in June. And we are talking about going to Asia in October, maybe? We will see how this goes. We may do a trash metal record, ha ha ha. Just so you can say, "Oh, I liked them before they did the metal record!"
David: We recorded that new EP in a place where Paco de Lucía [Spanish virtuoso flamenco guitarist] recorded, so there are no more steps to be taken. In case there would be more steps, as Ian said, maybe we will work on a metal record.
Frutos: These last months we have been practicing some Celtic Frost tunes. After the European tour we recorded eight songs in Madrid, and we are waiting for the mastering guy to do his job.
Xavi: I don't know nothing. I hope one day we do a pop record with Frutos singing.

ULTRA are on tour around the US in April and May. Listen at lavidaesunmus.bandcamp.com.

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THE CAVEMEN

Interview by Joe Ugg.
Photos provided by the band.

MRR: Who are you and why should I care?
We are the Cavemen: four ignorant cretins from the bottom of the world.

MRR: Tell us about your formative years. How did a pond scum evolve into the Cavemen?
We all went to high school together. Met in detention the first day. We were brought together by an utter contempt for authority and a shared burning love of rock'n'roll. We would sit in Jake Caveman's dark, dank basement listening to bands like the Gun Club or Flat Duo Jets, inhaling vinyl smoke or whatever we could find for kicks. When the glue fumes faded we started to write songs: *"I hate this. I don't wanna do this. I hate you."* After a few years we even picked up a chord or two.

MRR: Were there any local bands that turned you on as kids?
For the most part, New Zealand music was a cesspool of mediocrity. Lightweight electronic bullshit or gutless indie wank rock was (and still is) the norm. We were aware and inspired by bands like the Datsuns, the D4, and Rock and Roll Machine, but that scene petered out a few years before we were able to sneak into gigs. Once we hit our teens we realized that if we wanted to hear music as good as the Cramps or the Ramones in a live setting we were gonna have to do it ourselves.

But these days there are some incredible bands going on in New Zealand with few paying any attention. The X-Ray Fiends are a world-class band. Criminally underrated. They sound like Dick Dale wailing over Sabbath tunes while tripping balls! Another is the Admiral. Two-piece trash punk with explosive attitude and killer song writing.

MRR: Would you rather cite musical or narcotic influences as inspiring your sound?
I dunno which one has been more detrimental to our mental health. Hasil Adkins has squeezed our perception of reality more than any solvent and the Stooges will keep us up dancing, fucking, or vandalizing longer than any amphetamine on Earth. Rock'n'roll isn't just the soundtrack to our lives, it is our life until we die.

MRR: I hear you guys picked up a pretty gnarly rep in New Zealand. What's the story?
We attracted a reputation for broken glass and violence. But we're lovers not fighters. Those rednecks in NZ couldn't handle our trip so we told 'em all to go to hell and fucked off to England.

MRR: You recently released your first album. Got anything else lined up?
We have a couple 45s coming out soon. In Spain, El Beasto Records are putting out "Dog on a Chain / Death Row." Pounding power pop to the maxx!! In Italy on Goodbye Boozy records, "Too High Too Die / I'd Kill to See You Dead." This bad boy's gonna send you back to the stone age! It features a back-from-the-dead Takumi Caveman wailing like some sort of meth-crazed, mutant Ron Ashton.

MRR: Who writes the songs and how?
Paul and Jack Caveman come up with most of this garbage. Paul's songs come to him in nightmares and Jack writes his on the toilet. Basically any vile, juvenile ditty that we will gain some laughs from our degenerate fans.

MRR: What's the weirdest place you guys have played?
We've played everywhere and anywhere we could get away with! Demolition derby to punk squats. Chopper shows, even a Hells Angels Halloween party. Maybe the best gig we had lined up was in a graveyard, but our tour van blew up on the road and Nick got hit by a car. Fortunately he only hit his head, which is broken anyway.

MRR: Sounds like the cave sound has a wide appeal. Can you explain?
Degenerates and low achievers of all ages and backgrounds dig us. That's because rock'n'roll is timeless. Even Neanderthals were banging rocks together shouting "OH BABY!!!" People will be playing "Tutti Frutti" when the sun explodes! We get a lot of older fans who would go see the Ramones or the Cramps when they were teenagers and it's kinda like full circle for them now. We also get the biggest high turning new people onto rock'n'roll. Seeing a top 40 listening kid or a middle-aged Phil Collins listening pencil pusher getting down to some greasy music is such a thrill! R'n'r always comes out on top!!

thecavemennz.bandcamp.com

CLEVELAND SCENE REPORT

BY RICHARD OF SAUCEPAN RECORDS
FLYERS BY NATHAN WARD & LIA MASSARI.
TOP PHOTO: BULSCH, BOTTOM PHOTO: YAMBAG.

From "Most Miserable City to Live In" to "Hottest City to Move To," Cleveland, OH has had its ups and downs, at least according to a bullshit statistical analysis from a sub par financial publication. For anyone that lives here, it sorta just sucks all the time. For real rockers and punks alike it only sucks most of the time because you get to hear some great music or witness a great performance from the local contemporary music scene that has sprung up within the last five years. Most people either work in the service industry, the record pressing plant, the main screenprinting shop, or some other shitty wage job that allows us to start shows later. Even DIY shows won't get going 'til at least 10:00 p.m., some nights even later than that. Some sympathy for the promoter please, some of these jagoffs don't even show up with the right amount of cash sometimes! Has it always been that way? I remember shows at the TOWER 2012 and 71st DOOR (both long gone DIY spots) where shit wouldn't get going 'til like 11:30, lame ass kids would show up just to drink a 40 outside talkin about "I'm just here to party." Get the fuck outta here with that shit. Even before my time, in the SPEAK IN TONGUES days, shit was always running a little behind and the whackness was strong with some, those fucks will never stop breeding. That said, for the people that actually care and the musicians that actually make stuff happen, the Cleveland scene today is one of quality, not quantity, bud.

BANDS: I don't want to dwell on the past of such Clevo greats as H100S, GORDON SOLIE MOTHERFUCKERS, and INMATES. We all know and admire them and whatnot, but there's so much talent oozing through the asphalt like a mysterious toxic blob in Lake Erie, where to start? You got BULSCH redefining the Mongo Pack attitude through well-executed jibberish and pogo punk bliss. PIG FLAYER is a fresh blast of lo-fi *KBD* punk a la the ACTION SWINGERS or VICIOUS VISIONS, TONAWANDAS soaks you in reverbed synth-driven rock'n'roll, the COWBOY picks up where the legendary HOMOSTUPIDS left off with their trademarked blend of garage punk / hardcore stylings. LACERATE lead the pack of raw punk hopefuls with a hard stompin' D-beat and hard cutting riffs. MAGIC CITY is a newer band that's a mix of COLD COCK and the DARVOCETS! KILL THE HIPPIES continue to be the most underrated band in town / history after 20 years still ripping through JFA style riffs mixed with power pop flavoring! And BAD NOIDS still remain the head of new school of "Clevo-core" brats with a new 7" on Feel It. Other bands worthy of all of your attention, money, and dance moves are VANILLA POPPERS, YAMBAG, SHORT ORDER, MR. CALIFORNIA, RUBBER MATE, DIVA CUP, SHAGG, SHIT BLIMP, GRIN AND BEAR IT, and QUEEN OF HELL! There are plenty more to mention, but what is this, a goddamn pissing match?!

VENUES: I think depending on the type of music you play we're somewhat limited to places that will allow us to book shows in town. NOW THAT'S CLASS is the mainstay for a lot of us because we can get away with almost anything. Going almost ten years strong, there's really no other place like it in the country that I've seen. MAPLE LANES on the east side is a nice little bar that has been around forever and just recently started having shows on a regular basis. We're lucky to have places like that to break the mold and allow us to actually play different parts of town. There are other places around town that would be fine for a "fun" gig, but something like a hardcore show would never ever get booked there. My roommates and I continue to hate our home so we continue to have basement shows at what is now known as THE YELLOW GHETTO, conveniently located right next to NOW THAT'S CLASS. Going on two years now and we've done a lot of stuff including after shows to both Horrible Fest and West Side Punks Connect and allowing touring bands from next door to crash if they have nowhere else to go. I think that shit goes a long way—everyone could use a welcoming place to lay their head here and there.

PROJECTS: There's also plenty of other projects around town enabling all this punk shit. Shops include HAUSFRAU and MY MIND'S EYE (which doubles as a record store and indie label). Both carry all the classics of rock, jazz, funk, etc as well as local records and demos. I run a small, Cleveland-only label SAUCEPAN RECORDS which has put out entirely too much for only being around for about two and a half years including PRISON MOAN, NIGHT SCHOOL, LUCHA ETERNA, and the SAFETIES. All Cleveland bands all the time. My friend Ricky runs QUALITY TIME RECORDS which sticks more to a rockin' and rollin' format—that roster includes PIG FLAYER, the NICO MISSILE and SHAGG! And of course Kid, who you guys might know better as GAKI, runs the unfuckwithable KONTON CRASHER label who just dropped some serious wax with that new SVAVELDIOXID LP. Tooth's label MISTAKE BY THE LAKE has all the harsh noise your little butt can handle, and he's holding it down at HANSON RECORDS in Oberlin on a regular basis. Nathan Ward, who has drawn ads and what not for *MRR* and whose flyers are right next to this nonsense, makes awesome comics as well! I believe the name is changing from time to time, but they can be found at nwardcomics.net! A couple of folks also put together a video project which included fourteen bands called ENJOY CLEVELAND where we performed in front of a green screen and made some music videos! The copies are all sold out, but I believe there are talks of a volume two in the future with all new bands!

One of the best things, which has been going on for over ten years now, is HORRIBLE FEST. It's a three-day event that happens on Memorial Day weekend at NOW THAT'S CLASS where people come to embrace as many vices as they can and discover ones they never knew they had. There's a hot tub, a barbeque, people from all around the globe...and there's punk bands, too! People make the trip because the lineup is pretty diverse with locals that have built up a great live show, weirdos that crawl out of their mud hole, and out-of-towners that don't necessarily fit in anywhere else. It's usually way cheaper than most "fests" and you definitely get way more memorable experience, for better or worse.

We may not be as big or as popular as other cities, but most bands and people that come through seem to have a killer time! If you wanna come through or for more info on any of the names I dropped up there, hit me up at saucepanrecords@gmail.com!

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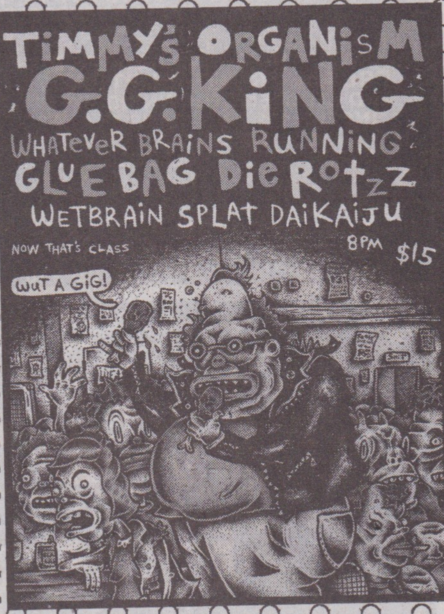

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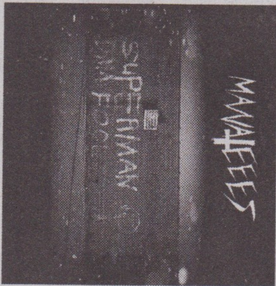
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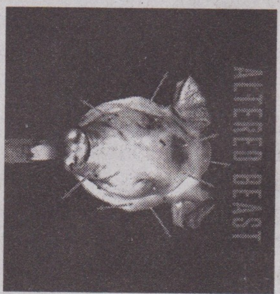
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CROOKED BANGS

For the past five years, Crooked Bangs—Leda Ginestra, Phillip Gonzalez and Samantha Wendel—have gloomed out a dark strain of punk rock, at least by their own estimation. On an unnaturally warm winter day in their home of Austin, Texas, they stood around a kitchen counter to discuss their music, unwanted Danzig references, the city that spawned them, junk food, corporate festivals, sexism, and art.

Crooked Bangs' second album, II, is out this April on Nervous Intent Records, and will be followed by a West Coast tour in late spring.

Interview by Cody Leitholt. Photos provided by Jon Chamberlain. Illustrations by Samantha Wendel.

MRR: Let's get the obvious shit out of the way. Let's start with names, instruments, and actual role in the band.

Phillip: My name is Phillip and I play the drums. My actual role? I'm not really sure. I'd have to ask you guys what I really…

Leda: I think your role is to show up and be present.

Samantha: Presence of mind.

Phillip: I do that.

Leda: My name is Leda. I play bass and I sing and my role is… Art overseer. Because I don't do any actual art but I make sure that it gets done, and making sure it looks good, because it always does.

Samantha: Presence…of art.

Leda: Presence of mind and of art is my role. Everybody knows Samantha's band dad. We're band children.

Samantha: I'm Samantha. I play guitar. I'm also band manager and treasurer. Band navigator, president, vice president, summa cum laude of the band.

Phillip: Bartender at the moment. [shots are being poured]

Samantha: Bartender. But we all try to do our fair share.

MRR: Please compress the history of the band into 30 seconds.

Samantha: Should we do our shots?

Leda: It'll be 30 seconds of taking shots and that's what it'll be.

MRR: If that appropriately reflects the history of the band then so be it.

Leda: Let me set a timer so that we can know how brief to be…OK, we were in a band together and then the band broke up so we started a band in Samantha's garage…

Samantha: Stinky, stinky garage.

Leda: …In the stinky, stinky garage, and then we got Phil to play later.

Samantha: Yeah, we had some other people and they were in the band at one point but they are no longer now. And then there was Phil and then there was joy.

Leda: Hey that was 27 seconds, so we nailed it.

MRR: How do you see yourselves stylistically? What's your musical statement of purpose?

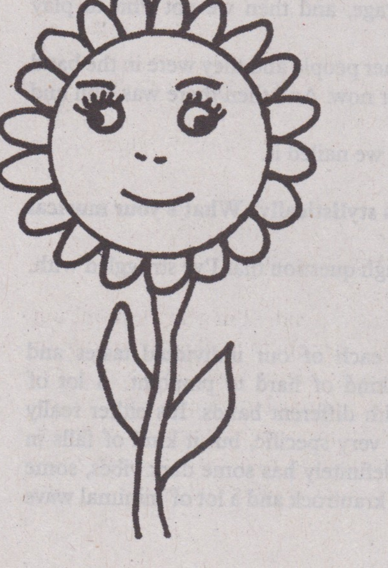
Phillip: This has been kind of a tough question that I've struggled with. I still do.

Samantha: I do too.

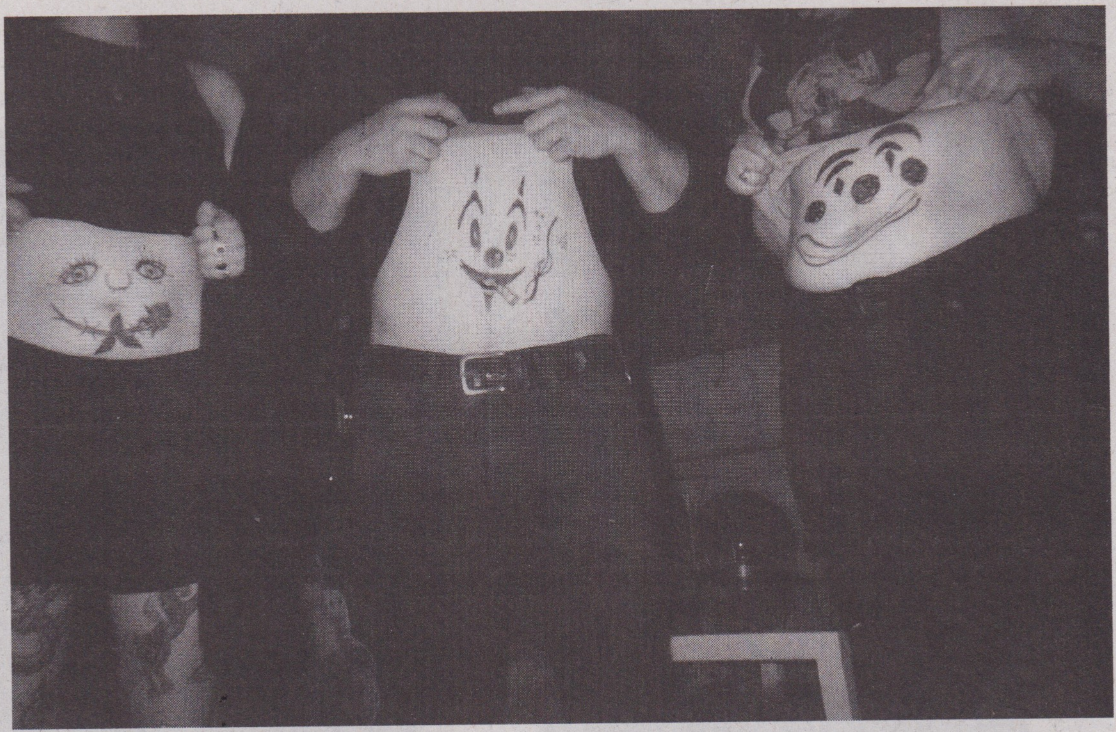
Phillip: When it comes down to each of our individual tastes and tendencies, it varies a bunch. It's kind of hard to pinpoint. A lot of people have trouble booking us with different bands. It's either really hard or really easy because it's not very specific, but it kind of falls in a couple different areas. I think it definitely has some dark vibes, some darker tendencies. I listen to a lot of krautrock and a lot of minimal wave

and I guess whatever you find in between. I'd like to say we're a punk band, but at the end of the day it's a lot of different things.
Samantha: Some people would dispute that probably. I think they're wrong, but they would dispute that.
Leda: I don't know, I just see us currently as sort of like weird gothy punk. Dark punk.
Samantha: Why are you both looking at me while you answer?
Leda: Do you approve? I don't know. There's a lot of deeply negative themes in our music and maybe we could just attribute it to being depressed and sad.
Samantha: You guys both wore all black, by the way.
Phillip: I never really thought about having a reason to do all this in the beginning, as much as it was an outlet for depression and anxiety. There's no real purpose. It's more therapeutic. The more you become part of a musical community, it's turned into its own thing. Now it's just fun to make records and hopefully make an impact on some people.
Samantha: Yeah, I'd agree. I think it's punk. That's a hard thing to be astute about and a lot of people probably disagree. And like Phil said, with those booking issues that we sometimes have, like "who do we pair this band with?" We're not super derivative of one particular thing. We're derivative of a bunch of different things. So I guess that makes it more complicated. We all have different interests that we bring into it. The music we're listening to is always very different. [Looks at Leda] I'd say you're more into metal than maybe we are.
Leda: Now I just listen to a lot of dad rock.
Samantha: So butt rock Leda and krautrock Phil and '20s blues Wendel.
Leda: Somehow our powers combine and we are dark punk.

MRR: So here's the flipside of expressing your own statement of musical purpose. When other people talk about your music, what do they get wrong? Ideally give me a one-sentence blurb that encapsulates everything you hate to hear written or said about you.
Leda: I know what I'm going to say.
Samantha: I hate the fucking Danzig references.
Leda: Same. I hate the young Danzig, Misfits vibe.
Samantha: Just because we've got like a low female vocalist, I hate that. It seems like an easy, lazy thing to say.
Leda: My runner-up for least favorite is that we broke up and we don't play shows any more.
Samantha: I think the main problem is bands in Austin play twelve shows a month and that's not what normal bands do, but if you don't play twelve shows a month, people think you've broken up. If you just even say, "We're taking time off, we're writing…"
Phillip: "We're laying low right now to write and shit," they're like "Oh." Take it the wrong way. People have asked me that too like, "What the fuck? I heard you guys were breaking up." We've been laying low and steady for the past couple of years though, to be fair.
Samantha: It's important to be calculated about what you do.
Phillip: Absolutely.
Samantha: You don't wanna push all the shit out the hole, you wanna push the good shit out the hole. Leave the bad shit inside to fester a little longer.
Leda: That makes that shit real stinky.
Samantha: Yeah, you wanna make it count.



MRR: You have an album coming out. Sell me on it.
Leda: Some very excellent people were involved, specifically Ian Rundell and good ol' Jack Control and also the Street Eaters folks, who run Nervous Intent records.A lot of cool people have come together to help us put this together and that is why you should listen to it. Because they made us sound cool.
Samantha: That's pretty good. That's very eloquent.
Leda: We're a bunch of nerds just trying to find people to make us sound cool.
Samantha: I think that's why everybody's in a band.
Leda: Some of it is in French. Some of it is in English. All of it has words.
Phillip: Listening to it as an outsider, it kind of has an ominous vibe with not a lot of specific direction. They all seem like small short stories, if you will. It didn't seem like you could really pinpoint it with one word or phrase. And maybe we are just that lazy, I don't know. But it worked out. It ended up being cool, I thought, visually and artistically.
Samantha: I think simple's always better. I think that's kind of what we came down to.
Phillip: Yeah, at the end of the day that's what it seemed like.
Samantha: Not overthinking it. You're right, all the songs are very different. They all have sort of like a darkness to them, but that's conveyed more visually than [through] the title. Like any sort of "this title is really dark" would be the cheesiest bullshit on earth.



Phillip: If you wanna talk about a selling point if anybody were to ask me, I don't think there's a real selling point besides…I mean, we worked really hard on it, and like it or don't. I mean, check it out. If you like music, check it out, and if not then fuck off. Who cares?
Samantha: FUCK YOU, we care about it.
Leda: We care about it. It doesn't matter if you don't care.

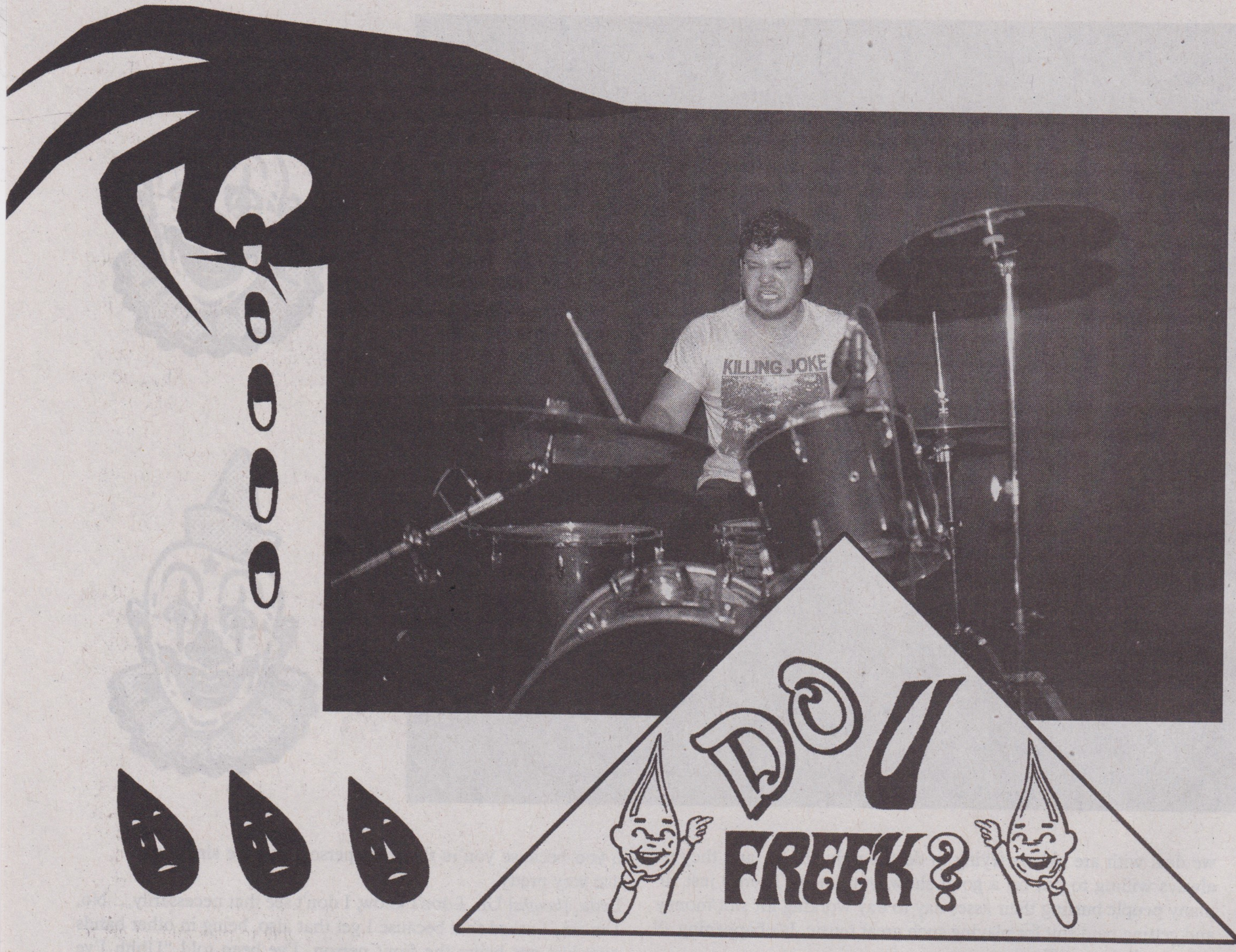
MRR: Your debut record came out in 2012. Five years is a pretty decent chunk of time between records. How does this new album compare to the first one?
Leda: Night and day, I would say. Our first record is very, very much a first record.
Samantha: Yeah, 100%.
Leda: We didn't put out any other releases prior to our first full-length, so we kind of jumped in without knowing exactly what we were doing. It's very, very first record sounding to me. You can tell that we're still trying to figure out how to be a band.
Phillip: Or a musician, for that matter.
Leda: This record, we've been playing these songs for a while. We're a lot more invested in them.
Samantha: Practically four years.
Leda: There's a lot more emotion and a lot more thought put into these songs, whereas the first record we were just so excited to put it together that it kind of came together really fast. And there was a lot more tongue in cheek in it, on my end, and it made it seem kind of campy. So this one was much more from our hearts.
Phillip: Well all of us, I think, also grew closer. All of our individual personal lives took a lot of different turns and we all kind of grew closer as a band, I think, after that.
Samantha: Yeah, we didn't really know each other when that first record came out—like well.
Phillip: And I think we really kind of got to know each other's tendencies. I wasn't used to really playing music still at that point, and I think I learned how to really truly collaborate with somebody by playing with you guys. I think [the new album] was just a progression. It's not completely different. I don't think it's night and day.
Samantha: I don't think it's a total unexpected turn. I think we just came in from a bunch of different bands, a bunch of different stylistic interests. We kind of just went into the studio without a real group thought process about how we would want to record these songs, based on the vision of the song or whatever.
Phillip: I look back at it and the experience was a blast, you know. The whole thing, it was great. But musically, sure, you know, it wasn't exactly where we are now. I had just joined the band not too long before that.
Leda: It was within our first year of being a band.
Samantha: It really happened fast.
Phillip: But for our second album, [recording with] Ian [Rundell], it was a totally different experience in that it was totally DIY.
Samantha: Which was better in some ways.
Phillip: It was so much better in that it was more our style. It was way more, I think, fulfilling in the end.
Samantha: It wasn't a business arrangement. It was just—we're recording and we're doing this. This is what we want to do, this is what we came here with. We wanna fuck around with some synths, we wanna be noisy, and we wanna have like four guitar tracks or one guitar track, it doesn't matter.
Phillip: It was a lot more personal with Ian in the room. We figured out our actual room sound, I mean as close as we could get it.

MRR: What's your favorite and least favorite trend in underground music these days, in general and in Austin specifically?
Leda: Uh oh. This is a problematic question.
Phillip: Personally, I think my least favorite trend—I'm going to come out and say this very loosely—I think was what South by Southwest did for music…as far as really poppy garage stuff. It left a wave of it here, more and more every year, until there was just nothing but poppy garage bands. But don't get me wrong, there's a really awesome thriving punk scene here. I think there are a lot of people involved right now that are doing cool things. And I think there are a lot more benefits and people actually

doing things for the right reasons and for a greater good. Especially in these times right now, where it seems like you have to be a lot more selfless than you already are. And I think a lot of people are taking that into their own hands and are doing solid things with it.
Samantha: I also think there's much too much poppy garage. I'm not going to name names but there's too much of that and I think it's lazy and it's boring.
Phillip: But with that being said I think there are some good—
Samantha: There are some *goooood* poppy garage bands. No genre is totally exhausted. There's still always good people that do it well. I think in Austin there's just too many lazy, dipshit postgrads that just want to play in a band. And they don't want to try very hard. And that's fine. But on the flip, like you said, there's this really burgeoning hardcore scene and punk scene, and people that care about making a difference in the world and in their own lives and in each other's lives.
Phillip: I'd like to say it's really cool to see how much of the Austin youth are coming out and starting new bands, and the bands are also coming out like really strong. Talented, angry, *angry* fucking kids, which is great because I think right now is a really good time to be angry, you know. But based on the political climate at the moment, it's really cool to see such young kids coming out and representing their scenes and their circles and their experiences. And I'd like to see a lot more of that. Of young people and young people of color and queer people and trans people and women…
Samantha: Everyone.
Phillip: Just everybody. The next generation of people need to be standing up and doing things.
Samantha: I think we're on the precipice of something really important and great. We're taking this town that we live in that's globally and nationally known as the "live music capital of the world"…
Phillip: And live music is shit on by the city.
Samantha: Yeah, fuck that. The city isn't supporting that, that's just our reputation for tourism purposes, but not for actual functionality purposes. And they're not really fulfilling their end of the bargain at this point. It's just unaffordable, big band, blowout festivals and shit like every six months, or every four months, or every two months that no one locally wants to go to.
Phillip: Actually, yeah—that's a massive trend that we didn't even think about. Just how anti-music the city is becoming.
Samantha: And the city is cracking down on all the same shit that they are still trying to gain a reputation from and profit off of.
Leda: Yeah the city is becoming less of a live music capital in the sense that there are shows happening every night at any and every bar—downtown or in the Red River district or on the east side or on the northeast side or whatever, or DIY spaces—whereas [the powers that be are] more focused on being a *festival* town.
Samantha: So we live in this city in which the whole reputation of the city and the entire reason that people move here is because of its cultural and musical impact. However, anyone with power or money or government impact is constantly trying to restrict that, especially during SXSW. Any non-official event gets squashed. Any house shows get squashed during South By. They get totally pummeled.
Phillip: There's a lot of people working really, really hard to make things happen. I think at the end of the day most of the people that

we deal with are always trying to do the right things, and they're always willing to put on a good show, you know. There's just so many people busting their asses day to day working for shit money and getting paid shit for playing such great music. It's happening all over, in all these different scenes.
Samantha: Yeah. I agree. I think that regardless of how poorly the city itself and the people in power treat the city and its music scene, there are still way more creative people condensed in a small area, working with each other and working well with each other, without the city's help, doing really good things. There's not as much restriction within music genres. There's openness for people to work within different clubs.
Phillip: Yeah. And this goes without saying, but way beyond even the music that we're referencing. There are so many bands and musicians that are underrepresented.

MRR: Crooked Bangs is a female-fronted band from both the songwriting and vocal perspective. I want to discuss the nature of being a woman in punk rock today, but male interviewers usually botch the questions being asked. Leda, would you like to ask Samantha a question on this topic, and Samantha can ask Leda a question?
Leda: Samantha, do you think that you have to answer a lot of sexist questions as a female musician?
Samantha: I do, but not as many as you because you're more attractive.
Leda: That's 100% not true.
Samantha: I get, "Oh you're so good for a girl." Like really entirely too frequently. And I get, "Uhhhhh man, you're so gooooood. It's so great to see, like, giiiiiirls being this goooooood." I get that so frequently. But I think that the sexual component of gender inequality in music is way more apparent to you because you're the front person and the singer and also very pretty.
Leda: [*laughs*] Uh, I don't know, I don't see that necessarily… No, I mean, I asked that because I get that also, being in other bands too, just not being the front person. I've been told "Uhhh I've never seen a girl play that way before, that's crazy!"
Samantha: "How do your little tiny girl hands do that?" I might be exaggerating a tiny bit.
Leda: Not even so much just the dum-dum jock guys that are like, "Oh, I've never seen a girl play guitar before!" I'm talking more about like maybe peers within the scene…
Samantha: Say you want to play music with someone else, there's resistance. You gotta prove yourself to them, to be able to play with them, more so than you probably would if you were a guy.
Phillip: I know this is more between you guys, but we face a lot of instances on tour. We were talking about it the other day.
Samantha: Oh my god, yeah. Booking as a female on tour. When we were booking that first tour, I got like "Are you sure you want to play with *that* band?" Shit like that all the time. And I was like "Oh my god, *yes*, I'm *asking* to play with them, of *course* I'm sure I want to play with that band!"
Phillip: I just remember being at an undisclosed place in an undisclosed state in the Southwest where they treated both of you like total fucking garbage…
Samantha: Dogshit, yeah.
Phillip: …And they treated me with kindness and respect, until we finished playing, and then they became



all ass-kissy. Which was hugely disgusting, for me, to see y'all be upset about how you were treated by a bar owner and a booker, as opposed to how they were treating me.

Samantha: It's always nice to be treated well when you play a good show, but if it's prefaced by being totally ridiculed and not taken seriously at all for two hours before you play, it doesn't matter. None of what happens that night matters. Also, a lot of booking shit via email was like, "Oh it's female-fronted? Like whatever." Or like "Samantha?" That's why I started signing "Sam." I would do that intermittently just because I don't care, because I go by both, but at some point I was like, "You know, Sam works better." And you know what? I should not have to sign by "Sam."

Leda: Right. I hate that.

Phillip: As a guy in a "girl" band, which is like kind of a thing that I've been…

Samantha: Struggling with…

[*laugher*]

Phillip: No no no no, something that I've been confronted with many times, which is like, what does that mean even? You know?

Samantha: You have a take on it too. You're part of this.

Phillip: They're like, "Uhhh so what's it like playing in a girl band?" And I'm like, "It's the shit." We're all human beings, what's it like for *you*, did you feel weird? Like, what's your fucking problem? What is this weird standard that you hold?

Leda: I've been really naïve, from the beginning, playing in this band specifically, because it was one of the first bands that I was in that played out, that I always felt that I was equal to everyone and that everybody received me equally. And then as time wore on, you realize that people don't see you equally. They either see you as a threat, or they see you as something that's really cute, doing something that's really "neat" and "fun" and so "inspirational," but ultimately like trivial in their eyes.

Samantha: Kitsch. It's not real, it's like a separate thing.

Leda: Yeah, it's just like, "Oh, it's so cute that those girls are traipsing around with their instruments, thinking that they're playing music."

Samantha: Yet I watch dudes play four chord wonder bullshit that's not even interesting every day of my life. And I don't ever say "Ahhh, that shit's so fuckin' infantile" because of who they are. It kills me.

Leda: Of course, we have to play like fuckin'…I want to say Stevie Ray Vaughan…We have to sound like fuckin' Steve Vai or something like that for anybody to think that we're great, whereas a dude can just shit on a guitar and they're like, "Ahhhhh, that band fuckin' ripped!"

Samantha: "The second turd hit the third chord at the right fraction. We all cummed in our pants."

Leda: "They're REAL rock'n'roll."

Phillip: We also get a lot of good responses as well, from people who we respect and love.
Samantha: Yeah, we don't only get bad responses.
Phillip: … I feel like women are held to such a higher standard and they're constantly breaking that standard, and making it better and better, and some people just aren't willing to accept that, and it's fucking disgusting.
Leda: Right. There's always a microscope held over women doing music whereas men in general can, you know, just kind of put some fun stuff together and everybody seems to think it's reeeeeal great.
Phillip: And also, just to add on to that…It's not just women. It's a lot of people who are left out in many ways and ignored.
Samantha: It's anyone who's not totally absorbed into a certain scene, that's an outsider. It's women. It's anyone [who is] gender nonconforming. Anyone that's not like a white dude or a "dude" dude, you're gonna hit a lot of interference.
Phillip: As a Latino dude, I'm going to be honest, I haven't had a lot of resistance doing the things I needed to do, and to play music. Everybody has different experiences, and I think that's the main point. You know, and mine hasn't been one, in the music scene at least, hasn't been one of huge resistance. My main motivation is to take a step back, and to really stand for what's right and what I believe in, and you know, to listen to what people are saying who aren't represented well, and to really push the people of talent.
Samantha: Who do you want to play music with? Good people. Humans. Good humans.

MRR: What do you do in life aside from Crooked Bangs?
Leda: I have a job and I play with the dogs all day. And the cat. And I'm in another band.
Phillip: I do graphic design for, you know, food money and life money. I live off graphic design. But I also live off my dachshund, Freddie. Visual art and music and dogs rule my life.
Leda: Music, dogs, work.
Phillip: Music, dogs, work, pizza, hot dogs, beers.
Samantha: Whiskey, pork, graphic design, in order of importance, rule my life. Just trying to be a person and do stuff every day even if it's not music.
Phillip: Hot Cheetos and cheese.
Samantha: Yeah, Hot Cheetos and cheese, should the day take me that path, I will gladly traverse that way. Just trying to live every day to its fuckin' goddamn fullest.
Phillip: Like Van Halen.
Leda: I wanna live every day hot for teacher.
Samantha: Like a diaper filled with raw steak, every day.

MRR: So there are two graphic designers in the band. Is that a blessing or a curse?
Samantha: Both!
Leda: For me, a blessing.
Samantha: For you, yeah, 'cause you know it's gonna get done.
Leda: Well I know it'll get done, but I also appreciate that y'alls aesthetics coincide very well and…I don't have to worry about it not being up to our standards, because our standards are being applied to all of the art that we make.
Samantha: Have we made an official Crooked Bangs style guide yet?
Phillip: We should. But I will say, I think we've gotten so much better at working together visually.
Samantha: I think we started off, like, everything a little rough…I think now we've gotten it really well.
Phillip: Well, since we also do it professionally, I feel like…
Samantha: You've gotten used to letting go.
Phillip: I'm used to seeing what I want to see from you, and I think vice versa. So I think art direction wise, we're able to actually conceptualize and execute in our own respects without stepping on each other's toes.
Leda: Also, as a band it is much cheaper for us to have two very artistically inclined graphic designers in the group because we don't have to worry about hiring outside for any of the art.
Samantha: Honestly that would drive me more crazy, trying to edit an outside artist.

MRR: As far as this band is concerned, what is your personal benchmark for success?
Samantha: We're still here. As long as I feel like keeping on, I'm good.
Leda: My benchmark for success has been that the last, I guess, year to two years, every show we've played, everyone has said we killed it, and that was when I measured our success, when people just said "that was awesome" every time.
Phillip: Really appreciated it.
Leda: And that response is the most I could ever ask for, that people think it's cool.
Samantha: When someone just shows up and they're like "You should stop. You're done. We're tired of this."
[*laughter*]
Phillip: Benchmarks of success playing music is a funny thing because I've actually thought about that here and there. When I was a kid, I used to listen to music…and I always visualized myself in that band. I'm not gonna say which bands they were back then…
Samantha: Megadeth.
Leda: MEGADEEEEEETH!
Phillip: But I always set standards for myself. Like at first I wanted to hear myself just recorded period, and then that happened. And then I wanted to hear myself on an actual pressing of either a record or CD or tape or whatever, and that happened. And then I was like, "I want to go on tour." That'll be the ultimate thing, was just to hit the road with my friends and to play music. And then that happened. And I think now it's just mostly a feeling. When I'm able to play and…I get to see people that are into it, and it means something.
Samantha: As long as it feels OK and we're all really happy doing it, that's all that matters. I really don't look too much more into it. If I just can't write songs and I'm dead or something, like all my limbs are cut off, as long as I'm just having fun. Impulsive, in-the-moment enjoyment is really all you could hope for. If you can fulfill that, that's the peak of enjoyment for a creative pursuit.

Write Crooked Bags at LesCrookedBangs@gmail.com.
Their new LP will be out this spring on Nervous Intent.

K9-67

THIS IS THE ONLY LIVE PICTURE I HAVE OF THE BAND, SORRY ABOUT VINCENT'S FACE BUT HE'S KIND OF PARANOID ABOUT THIS STUFF.

-DUSTIN

K9-67

When I saw the K9-67 EP come into MRR *headquarters, I was drooling with joyful curiosity and just plain "What the Fuck Is This?!" wonder. I beheld a shitty masterpiece of a black and white collage cover consisting of a skull eating the Earth with a syringe thrusting 0.5 ccs of dope into our world, some conservative whiteys, and a giant knife thrust through a Rottweiler's head with the word "punk" on its blade. Who the fuck has the audacity to simply title their record "Punk"? The back gives little or no info except some tiny grainy photos and lyrics like* "Cross out my eyes / Blow out my brains / Human scum / Useless remains / All these people around me you all make me sick / You make me sick" *(from the song "Sick"). The music is so blown out, distorted noisy and violent I wanted to eat babies immediately. So is this an old classic rediscovered or a band of miscreant teens hiding out in a shitty basement waiting for armageddon? When tracking down a copy, I inadvertently came into contact with Brad (William?) from Brach Records and got hooked up with an interview with this mystery band.*

Interview and introduction by Rotten Ron Ready.

MRR: So I'm going into this blind. Who's in the band, where are you from, and how long have you been around or are you still around?
There are four members of K9-67. There is me, Dustin, who plays guitar and will be answering all these questions. Calvin plays drums, Jenn plays bass, and Vincent sings. Vincent was supposed to help me do this since it's our band but he's too busy working or something, I don't know honestly. We are all from Livingston, MT and we all met at Park High school where three of us go. Livingston is about 30 minutes east of Bozeman, MT, equally shitty. Vincent doesn't go to high school anymore. He graduated already. K9-67 has been a band for a year and a half probably and yeah we are still around obviously if you're asking us these questions. I mean, did you think you were like emailing a ghost or something? That's a weird question.

Me, Calvin, and Jenn all met at the beginning of high school. Calvin I think had a Discharge patch on his backpack and I didn't even know who Discharge was and asked him about it and he showed me. They are pretty okay. He knew Jenn and knew she had a bass so we started hanging out. Jenn's older sister was dating Vincent at the time and he wanted to start a new band since his old band SCN (Soiled Chinese Newspaper) fizzled out. Vincent is 25, so he's kind of the leader of the band. He and I write all the music and he writes all the lyrics to our songs. That's basically K9-67 in a paragraph.

MRR: What does the band name mean? I imagine government experiments with interrogation drugs made from dog semen.
K9-67 is definitely not a government experiment. That's crazy to think actually. I guess it looks like some government drug made with dog semen, I don't know, but it's not. Okay, you're like half right. K9 is obviously a dog. So the K9 part comes from a police dog, since those are the meanest dogs I can think of. Have you ever been attacked by a K9 unit? It sucks. So yea, K9 is a dog who's mean as fuck and scary and 67 is an angel number. The number 6 has the meaning of like, honesty and integrity and unconditional love. The number 7 corresponds with inner wisdom and spiritual awakening. Then put them together and 67 is a connection with the angelic spiritual realm. I read about this in one of my step-mom's numerology books she has laying around. Put them together, K9 and 67, you basically have the dynamic of heaven and hell. Good vs. Evil. It's actually all pretty simple if you read between the lines.

MRR: So my imagination went wild picturing what your band looked like. Jaded indie rockers looking for kicks? Pissed off dads playing in a garage? What's your backgrounds and is this your first band?
You actually couldn't be farther from the truth, Mr. *MRR* Man. Jaded indie rockers? That's insane and rude. Like I said in the first question, I guess I jumped the gun, but we are all from Livingston, MT. It's a small railroad town. I think there's about 8,000 people here? I'm not too sure but it is shit. This is my first band, yes. I started playing guitar maybe two years ago. So, I'm seventeen, Calvin is seventeen, Jenn is sixteen, and Vincent is twenty-five. I started playing guitar just cause I was bored. My uncle had one laying around and I bought it off him for $20 so I started that way. It's really not that hard to play guitar. Calvin had been in one band before, called Frost. He played drums in that too. I never got to see them, but I have heard they were good. I mean, there is not a big punk music scene in Livingston. Everyone here is white and a son / daughter of a railroad worker. No one likes anything good. This is also Jenn's first band. She had a bass so we asked her to be in K9-67. She had never played with anyone before, just fucked around in her room. She's like not very good and she'd admit that if she was here doing this with me.

Vincent had been in numerous bands before apparently. He was in Dirt Knuckle, who I saw once and it was really garbage actually. It just sounded like a log splitter on reverse. Just pure trash. He also sang in another band called Vrasta. I never saw them but Calvin said they were amazing. I've heard their demo and it's actually good. Surprising for Vincent since he's so stupid. I guess the most notable band Vincent was in was called SCN which stood for Soiled Chinese Newspaper. Musically I guess they were okay, nothing exciting, punk I guess. They were known more for the band name and how it arose. People in Livingston and Bozeman know him cause of it. He was dating this girl, not Jenn's older sister, and he found out she was cheating on him so apparently when she wasn't home he covered her bed in old Chinese newspapers. Then he proceeded to piss all over the newspapers so they were soaked. Which is gross, cause cleaning up wet newspaper is hard cause it all just falls apart. Pretty funny though, but yea that's how he's known. But yeah, he dated Jenn's older sister and she suggested him for K9-67 and so he sings for us now.

MRR: Were you intentionally trying to be so cryptic with your record or was that Brad who put it out's doing?
I don't think it's really that cryptic. Is it? I mean it has the band name, lyrics, and record label. By Brad, do you mean William? The guy who runs Brach Records told us his name was William. Maybe his name is actually Brad? Now I'm not too sure either. But let's just say "Brad" had no input on the art or direction, he let us do whatever we wanted. It was cool. He basically said, "I want to do a record with you guys. Here's my mailing address and phone number. Send me your art and recordings and we'll work something out." The name he wrote down was William. We didn't have anything even recorded really, but we had a handful of songs so we recorded these three songs at our friend's garage. Then we sent the cassette to "Brad" along with the cover art that we made at Kinko's. I think he added the white box on the back for the stamp. It looks cool. I'd call him at least once every other week to see what was going on with it just to make sure he wasn't lying to us. But he wasn't, and a box arrived at my house with some flexis. It was exciting. It came out good. I don't like the big covers though. They don't really fit in the plastic covers very well. Vincent said that was what "cool records" look like so I guess I trust him more than anyone.

MRR: I hear some '80s Scandinavian and Japanese influence as well as some good old dirty basement U.S. hardcore thrown in there. I'm shitty with comparisons, so what are your inspirations?
I don't think I have heard any '80s Scandinavian or Japanese music really. Calvin showed me some bands I liked I suppose. There's this band called Cyanide Vision from Montana. They are Hardcore. I think they were around 1985. His dad has a demo tape by them, it's great. I really like Black Flag. Vincent shows me a lot of stuff too. He has this box of cassettes and always goes "Yeah, *yeah*, write a part like this" and I try to mimic it on my guitar. I'm not sure what any of the bands he plays me are though because none of the tapes have labels. Just a bunch of mixtapes and shit he's gotten from friends. I guess they are all in the vein of hardcore. Thinking back, maybe I have heard some of that foreign hardcore you mentioned and just didn't know because Vincent is a moron and doesn't help.

MRR: You seem pretty pissed and jaded from your lyrics and the noise you're making on this release. Is that real or an act?
Honestly, this is a Vincent question and like I said he's too busy doing I don't even know what. Too busy for the band I guess. I can tell you though, that Vincent is pretty mad all the time. It's always one thing or another he's pissed at. I didn't get new guitar strings, his boss at Albertson's didn't approve his time off or made him stay over time, his car died again or something. He's always mad. Knowing his past and reputation I doubt Vincent is making this an "act." So yea, he's pissed at a lot of things. Hess told me most of his songs are about his disagreement with society and their standards its put on him / us, but I honestly don't get it. Life's not that hard. Just go to school, go home and eat, and repeat. He makes a big deal out of nothing.

MRR: Brad said he saw you live once. Have you played out a lot? Where and with whom? What's the K9-67 live experience like?
Yeah, "Brad" saw us play in Bozeman. He told us he was there on a business meeting and saw a flyer for our show we played there. He said he saw it at Cactus Records on the flyer rack. Bozeman is a college town so there's a lot of people there. It's a big city. We played at some house show with some other local bands. It was with this band Bearcat 9000. They sucked! It was some garbage garage rock band with all these old guys. We opened the show and I thought it went well. I mean we played well, I don't know what people thought but apparently "Brad" liked it enough to talk to us and put out this record. How's the experience? I don't know man. Have you ever seen a live band before? I imagine it's something like that. It's loud, fast, people watch and you play. The other band that played was called Wreckhall. They are *okay*. They are from Bozeman too. Punker than Bearcat 9000 for sure. I actually like the kids in Wreckhall.

MRR: Looking into the future, are there any new releases in sight? Future plans for world domination?
I'm not sure. We have about three new songs. I don't know. I feel like this record was a lucky mistake in some way. We really haven't had contact with "Brad" up until he called me about this interview then sent me these questions. I don't know if he's interested. I don't know if they even sold well. I think maybe we'll record the songs and send him the new tape and if we hear back from him then sure, why not. I kind of want to start a new band. Vincent is hard to deal with in a band. So for me, yeah in going to do a new band. I don't know about the others. Apparently Vincent said he wants to tour but I have no idea how that works or how we do it? He knows someone that could help us so possibly that. I'd rather stay at home though and watch TV.

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KOVAA RASVAA

Finland has something new and exciting to offer—Kovaa Rasvaa. It's fast. It's energetic. It's powerful and they will blow you up your mind when you see them live. They are touring the West Coast of the United States in March and April—go see them and you will enjoy it, we promise. But first, here's who and what they are.

Interview and introduction by Markku. Photos by Jouni Parkku.

MRR: How did you all meet each other?
Otto: I was hanging with you all a lot before I joined the band and at that point we all knew each other already.
Kerttu: Me, Anne and Johanna found each other for real when our previous band Khatarina started.
Anne: I think Khatarina had its first rehearsals in 2003 or so.
Kerttu: We took Otto when our first drummer Timo told us that he didn't want to play with us anymore. In fact we really needed a drummer urgently then. We needed someone who knew our songs, because we had quite a few gigs booked the next month or so. But Kovaa Rasvaa of course started way before that.
Anne: I guess we started when we organized that hardcore fest in Turku. I asked Timo if we could borrow his drums for the festival. At that time Khatarina had already plans to split up and I asked Timo if he wanted to play something with me.
Kerttu: We knew the end was just around the corner for us and we had our final gigs lined up. It was about a month after Khatarina's last gigs when Kovaa Rasvaa had the first gig. It all happened extremely fast and both bands kind of lived simultaneously for a while.
Johanna: Anne, you asked me to play guitar with you and Timo. And then we asked Kerttu for vocals.
Anne: By that time we all had cellphones so we didn't have to call Kerttu's mom, like we did when Khatarina started quite a few years earlier.

MRR: Why did you change from Timo as the drummer to Otto? That's your only lineup change ever.
Johanna: We had had lots of differences with Timo for quite some time. He was not really into the venues we played at or the scene we hung out in and where we still play and do all kinds of stuff. He didn't feel at home in that scene anymore.
Kerttu: He wanted to be more involved with the metal crowd and it's really not our thing as a band, not at all.
Johanna: But in the end it still came somewhat of a surprise to us at our rehearsal place in the summer of 2015 when he finally announced us that he didn't want to continue. We still had a UK tour booked for that summer and lots of other gigs too. I think we wondered for a second if we should continue or stop, but it was very obvious that we would continue. The three of us has such a great feeling about the band and in the band. But that's when we needed a drummer, someone who could play the songs already. Me and Otto came and practiced, just the two of us, and that's when we built the set list for the tour. At first we thought that Otto would just help us out with the tour and that would be it. There were quite a few people who showed interest in being our drummer, but we wanted to keep Otto. He was clearly the easiest and best solution for us.
Kerttu: Yeah, Otto was the easiest solution for sure, but on top that he really played the set brilliantly. I remember being very scared when I came to the first practice with Otto, I was wondering how it would go. But it was great from the first beat and I just started smiling and it just instantly felt better than ever before. So we really didn't even have to think and ask other people, since we had so much fun from the start and it sounded just right for us.
Johanna: But still we kind of kept the drummer's position open for some time and talked about it. I guess after a month or two we just stopped thinking and decided that this is it.

MRR: You don't do long tours, but you seem to find our way to lots of places. How do you get those tours organized?
Anne: So far we've been to Germany, UK, Brasil, Russia, Belarus, Sweden, Denmark, so I guess we've been quite active. All the tours get organized the same way all the other DIY punk tours do.
Johanna: We usually just talk about doing something at rehearsal places, like it would be cool to go here or there. Does somebody know someone there? And usually someone does know somebody. Otto has a connection or Kerttu know someone or you Markku...then we just set up and get the ball rolling and ask if we could come to play their area. So far it has worked out great.

MRR: Seems pretty easy in theory.
Anne: Yeah, it's been surprisingly easy.
Otto: It's pretty much the same system as it was 25 years ago when I organized more tours. But of course it was way slower then. You actually had to write letters all around the world. Nowadays you can get answers the same day you ask. Before you had to wait days or weeks to get a letter in mail. But that was also very exciting in a way.
Johanna: This upcoming West Coast tour started when we noticed that Norwegian Airlines had cheap flights. So we just decided the dates of the tour when the flights were the cheapest and bought the tickets. After that we started thinking about the actual tour and who could help us out.

MRR: You were really confident that it'd work out somehow.
Otto: You know that this is the way this global network of friends still works in the DIY punk scene.
Anne: So far it's all been really easy and I guess that's why we dared to just buy

those tickets even if we didn't have any kind of concrete plans for the tour. It all works out great in the end...usually..

MRR: Kovaa Rasvaa (Hard Fat) is not really a typical name for the band. Where does it come from?

Kerttu: It's heavily connected to Timo.

Anne: Did he actually come up with that?

Kerttu: I think so. But the idea was just to have a reference to Timo's lifestyle. He just told us about eating some pork before the weekend and he actually drank the hard fat the pork was fried at. He talked about hard saturated fat and drinking the whole weekend after that. It was so rancid, even the way he told the stories. So that's where it came from. It really told a story about his lifestyle choices.

Johanna: He was quite provocative often.

Kerttu: He still is...

Johanna: Yes, he still is. Of course he knew that for some of us vegetarianism is an important thing. We've been vegetarians for a long, long time. He wanted to highlight the fact that he wasn't and that he actually did eat hard fat. Or maybe that was his way to underline his masculinity. In the beginning we had lots of fun as a band together, even if we had lots of other differences in our opinions. And we really had a feeling of togetherness in the beginning despite the differences.

Kerttu: Yes, that's very true. We ended up having lots of good conversations and fun at the same time. It wasn't gloomy at all, since everybody respected everybody else's opinions.

Johanna: We did lots of songs together then, also lyrics. We all built the songs together in our rehearsal room.

MRR: So has that changed now? Does it mean you don't really write songs together now?

Anne: I feel like everybody participated in the beginning, maybe more that now. But I wanna say something about our name still. I had an idea in my head, when we started. I wanted all the lyrics to be about that masculine lifestyle or despair, that lots of for instance alcoholics or long-term unemployed males have. That was the original perspective for our songs, all of the songs, because that kind of thinking or those heavy situations somehow interest me. So all that is connected to the name too.

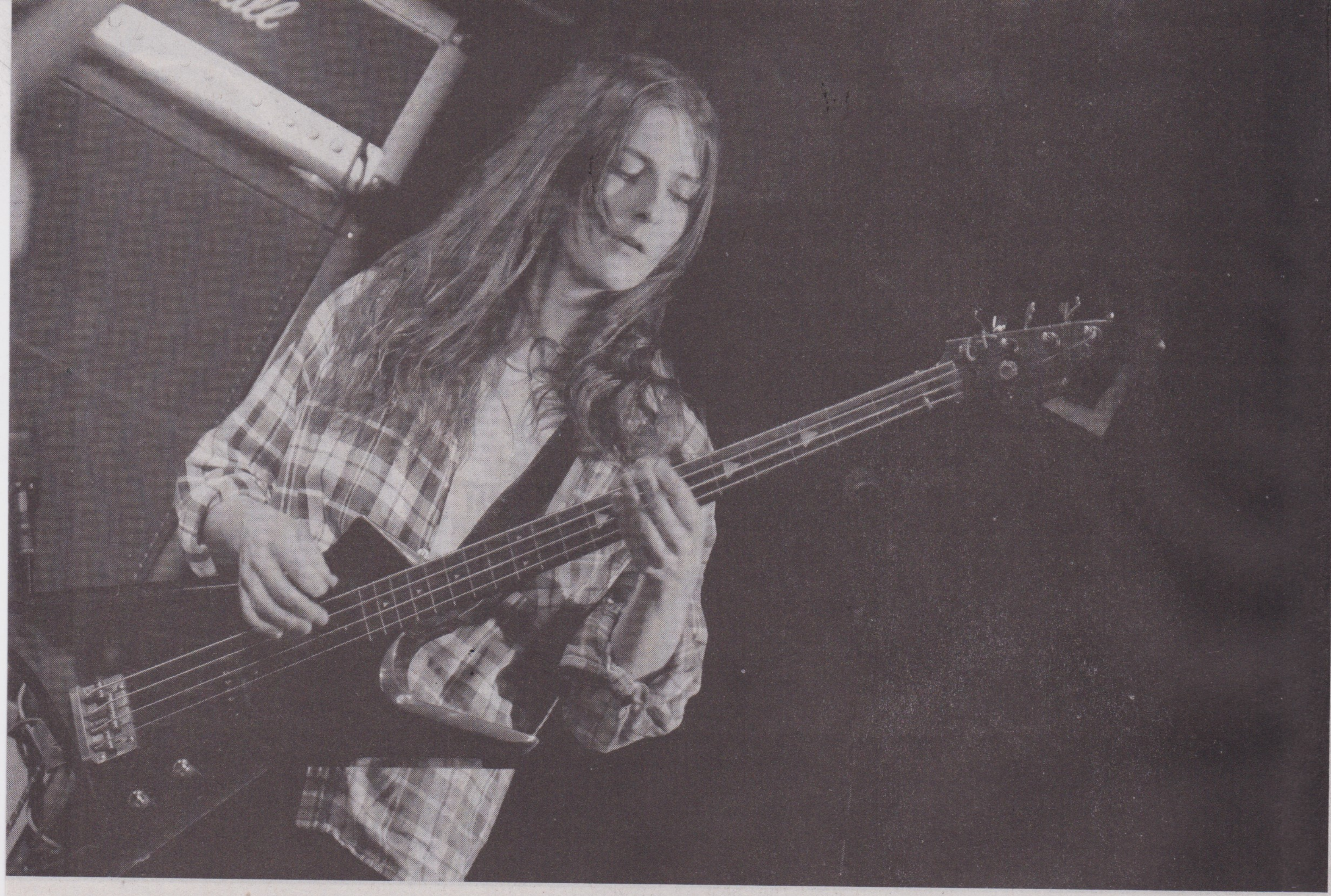
Kerttu: Kovaa Rasvaa songs have lyrics exactly about that.

Anne: Yeah, that's true. But that was pretty much it. I just couldn't really come up with the lyrics from that point of view. I guess I couldn't interpret those situations well enough. So that was the end of that.

Otto: One song miracle.

Johanna: "Kovaa Rasvaa" is a good example of a style that we made songs at our practice. That day Timo was very excited to tell us about his pay day, how he was going to buy a big case of strong beer and some hard fat on top of it.

Kerttu: In the beginning we did songs just like that. Someone said something, anything, and someone else just grabbed it from the air and started working with it. We still do it and sometimes we write down ideas for a song. That happens a lot while on tour. I don't know how much



we really use those ideas afterwards, but maybe something comes out of it.
Johanna: If you write something on a chewing gum wrapper, it's hard to read or even find it after the tour.
Kerttu: In the beginning most of the lyrics came from random things, whatever we were talking about, like for instance that one lunatic in the internet....
Johanna: *Voima* (a free magazine that has stuff about environmental issues, activism, politics, music, etc...) has been with us from the beginning. There was a gig at original TVO and I was selling tickets. I was going through *Voima* and started circling sentences that sounded good. I started connecting these random sentences to each other. Timo was at that gig and I told him that we had some lyrics. He didn't seem to be too excited, since he wasn't really the biggest friend of this magazine, but he liked the lyrics. It's still an important way for us to come up with lyrics. So in a way we have recycled lyrics.
Otto: I think that's a brilliant way to do lyrics.
Johanna: Sometimes we don't take sentences but just single words and disconnect those from the original topic and connect those words into something completely different. And we still do this a lot.
Kerttu: When I'm arranging lyrics to songs I often get very different topics, images, or feelings than the original articles had, even if you knew where the lyrics came from. Our lyrics always create their own story or an image, at least for me.

MRR: Now that I know the source and the fact that Timo wasn't so excited about you using *Voima*, do you all think your lyric are political?
Anne: I think you can easily find somewhat political things in there, if you want. But most of it is not political in a-traditional-punk-lyrics way. Maybe it's not so easy to find commentary on daily politics in there; it's more reflecting or pondering thoughts than direct commenting.
Kerttu: I think our lyrics are still taking a stand in their own way.
Johanna: It's easy to use this old feminist saying here: The personal is political. It means that your personal choices and your personal area of life is always political. And that means that being political or politics is not just standing behind some ideology, it's everything you do. When I'm doing our lyrics I have lots of daily politics in my head, something that annoys or maybe surprises me. And then I start seeing words or sentences that I connect to this thought in my head and these sentences reflect my thoughts, even if no one else sees it. I bring a proposal of lyrics to our practice, and we all arrange it to a song together. Most of the time the lyrics have changed quite a bit in the final version of the song. Kerttu always makes the final arrangements and she adds or removes songs and sentences and she might not even know my original idea behind the lyrics, because sometimes we might not talk about it. To Kerttu those lyrics can mean a very different thing than they did to me.
Kerttu: We often talk about the articles or topics, but not where the lyrics to certain songs come from.

MRR: So are you offering questions or answers to the listener?
Kerttu: I think we do both. On some songs the idea is very clear and it might not raise any questions. Some songs might

have such a difficult ideas that it's hard for me to understand.

MRR: I think there's music behind the lyrics; how do you come up with that?
Johanna: I do almost all the guitar riffs nowadays. Back in the day we did more together at the practice.
Kerttu: Even then you brought lots of it.
Johanna: Yes, I did. But then we thought of the structure of the song more collaboratively. Now I can do the riff at home and even arrange lots of it. Now that Otto is on drums we come to practice a lot just the two of us and try different things and do lots of arranging before anyone else even hears any of it. That might be just a practical thing, since we don't live in the same city. It feels like we get more done, if it's just two of us.
Otto: I feel like you often have an idea for the whole song, not just the riff. You have thought of the song structure and have a clear vision even when you present it to me. Sometimes you even give me hints what to do with drums.
Johanna: I guess I do nowadays. Timo brought rhythms to practice, he had a rhythm or idea for drums and we then started working the song from there.
Otto: Now it's the other way around, you have the rhythm and the idea and I just need to come up with a way to play it on drums.
Johanna: I feel like the bands I've been in before have been more democratic. But I think this is just because we live in different cities and have a chance to play together way less than in other bands. I love it that the songs get their final form at practice when me and Otto play them over and over and at the same time Kerttu arranges the lyrics and drinks beer in the corner
Kerttu: I don't always bring beer.
Johanna: I guess most of the time you drink tea. But anyway, you have the hardcover lyrics book, that includes all the possible stuff and rants. Then you decide what lyrics fit the song and how to alter them to fit the structure and at the time we might play the song tens of times.
Kerttu: That's when the song might change a lot.
Johanna: And it may change quite a few times during those sessions. At some point you crawl out of the corner and have a feeling you know how the lyrics should sound and fit the song. Then we play it again few times with vocals. Anne now lives in Copenhagen, Denmark and she kind of has to just learn the songs when she's here. But of course she can do whatever she wants with the basslines. So in a way Anne is involved with the arrangements.
Anne: Not very much at the moment...
Kerttu: In the end everyone still has a say in a song, even if Johanna usually is the one behind the idea and you put it together with Otto.
Otto: It seems that we have a good feeling inside the band since everyone's giving credit to everyone else.
Johanna: If I compare this to my previous bands, it's pretty obvious that this is very different. If I compare this to Yhteenotto for instance, it was completely different experience for me. It was clear from the beginning that Jonne did all the music by himself. He had a very clear vision how the music should sound and how the songs are arranged.
Otto: Harsh and pedant conductor.
Johanna: His vision was very clear and strict, you couldn't really change it. So it was quite different from us.

MRR: How big a part of your lives is Kovaa Rasvaa?
Kerttu: It's pretty big actually.
Anne: Yeah, it is. At least when we see each other or are on the road, then it's obviously a huge part of it, but most of the time it's just a really cool memory from the past or something to look forward in the future. It's one of the great things in life. It spices up life and gives you energy.
Otto: It's not that we live and breath Kovaa Rasvaa on a daily basis, but when it happens, you know and feel it to the bone. Playing music is just fantastic.
Kerttu: It's huge part of my social life nowadays. I just don't have time to go to gigs as much as before, and maybe that's why it's even greater feeling to have our gigs and then you get to see other people too.
Johanna: For sure Kovaa Rasvaa is my most beloved hobby. Well, it's the only one. But it's still a hobby. Life is filled with so many other things at the moment too. And it's for sure a social thing, an important social thing. I also don't have too much time to hang out at gigs nowadays, if I do, it's usually something Otto has organized, but it's still quite rare for me.

MRR: Do you feel you participate in the scene a lot? And does it matter?
Otto: Yes, it matters, a lot. I've reduced my activities a lot, but I still notice that there's some ideas at the back of my head all the time, even if it materializes less often than before. Sometimes I organize gigs for my bands or touring bands or do anything that supports the DIY scene. We had this venue called Rekisteri here in Turku and that got demolished, but there's a new one now being built. I'm heavily involved, in spirit. That doesn't help them very much, but I appreciate that kind of activism a lot.

I still release records too, less often than before, but there's always something coming out. My latest release was the Armagedom / Nuclear Frost split EP. To this day I haven't actually seen it here in Finland, but it came out after the summer. I think this time our label was called Demilitarized Subconscious. As I said, we haven't seen the record yet, but I guess it will find its way to Finland one of these days.
Anne: I was at a gig at Ungdonshuset last night and found out that they need a lot volunteers and there's lot of things that need to be done to keep local punk scene vital and living. It takes a lot of work and no one gets paid. Ungdomshuset needs sound people and people for other jobs as well. I promised to go there some weekends and help in the kitchen, but they also asked if I could do the sound for them. I thought that they really must be in need, since they asked me to do the sound!

I really enjoy that I have had a chance to participate and invest in the DIY scene here. When I was living in Helsinki I didn't had time for anything that wasn't related to this band. But now that I'm living here in Copenhagen, I can participate more, get more involved again with the local punk scene and that feels great. It also feels like something worthwhile to put my time on, because money is not the main thing or motive here. It's all about doing things for ourselves and making ourselves feel good and it's definitely something positive. It makes you feel good too, when you take part in all these activities this scene has to offer.
Kerttu: All that work keeps the scene active and that's how we have been able to go to places and play gigs in other cities and countries. It pissed me off, that I don't really have time to do all those things nowadays. I used to cook food for lots of gigs at TVO here in Turku, but can't do it anymore. But I'll do what I can. At Rekisteri I was able to cook for bands more. But I'm involved with music and bands on a daily basis, since I'm working on Svart Records and have been since the beginning. In a way it keeps me

involved with bands and music, I do enjoy it a lot, even if I am taking care of the stock or handling customers most of the time, but still being involved with music and bands.
Johanna: And you are also responsible for doing the Kovaa Rasvaa merchandise.
Kerttu: In a way I can do it at my work sometimes..
Johanna: If you didn't do it, we wouldn't have any of it.
Kerttu: Maybe so. I also try to go to gigs to see all the bands I want to see and as much as I have time and energy. I really enjoy it, I just don't have as much time as I used to, don't have time to help with organizing stuff, even if I appreciate all the hard work people put into it.

MRR: Talking about merchandise. You are a really unique band in Finland with your merchandise. How did you come up with all that stuff? Was it planned or did it happen by accident. You have all these crazy colorful long sleeve college shirts and insane caps etc. No one else in Finland has any of that.
Kerttu: We'll do anything that pleases our own eyes. I also think that our merchandise looks good on people.
Otto: I was following you guys before I joined the band and it felt like all that stuff came very naturally to you. I feel like all that stuff fit you guys really well. Kovaa Rasvaa was really cool and quite different from other bands, that's great.
Johanna: Kerttu is the mastermind behind all the crazy colors and designs and that's just wonderful. Our patch has been involved with lots of merch. We have this cool embroidered patch and it's been really popular and I have to say, it does look great. So we put on different things—we've had it on tons of cool caps that we have bought from flea markets and during the winter we've been sewing the patches to winter hats. We've been buying hats in bulk from stores and did what ever we could with the patch.
Otto: That's all been very DIY, we've done it all by ourselves and didn't order it from anybody else.
Kerttu: Now we have this sweat pants project, so that's what we'll have next. Priority number one. The plan is to have a big logo on the sweatpants like all those thrash metal bands had in the early '90s.
Anne: Those will be something completely different again...

MRR: So if you fill as much of your life with music and this scene as possible, what else is in your life?
Johanna: Work and family.
Otto: Resting after work. It's so fucking heavy to have this job, so you just need to take it easy afterwards. You need to just take it easy and enjoy the things you enjoy, the company of loved ones, your hobbies like music and records and movies.
Johanna: Listening to records at home. And some of us have family life too. I have a fifteen-year-old daughter who drives a moped. She lives every other week with me and Otto and the rest of the time with her dad. When she's with us, life is centered around her a lot. Cooking, doing laundry, taking care of her hobbies, all the basic responsibilities you have when you have a kid. And when she's not around, we have a chance to do something else.
Kerttu: That's when we have our rehearsal.
Johanna: Yes, as much as we can.
Otto: All the gigs are booked so that she's with her dad at the time.
Kerttu: I have the same situation. My kids are with me half the time and in fact we'll try to work it out so that Johanna and Otto have the kid at the same time

as I have mine. That just makes sense and then we can have rehearsal and gigs.
Johanna: That also means that this band is a big deal to us and we try to do things so that we really have a chance to invest time to this band.

MRR: How much does it affect you all that Anne is now living in Copenhagen, Denmark? How far ahead do you need to plan everything?
Anne: Right now I can't really participate in lots of stuff like practices, but we still try to do as much as we can and organize gigs so far ahead so that I can make it back to Finland.
Kerttu: I think that there's not really a big difference if Anne lives in Copenhagen or Helsinki. Other than we of course started to organize gigs to her direction as soon as possible. So it kind of just got easier to have gigs in Copenhagen.
Anne: We all want to do things for this band, so the mental step to live in a different city or country is not so big, not in these times of Skype and all that. We all want to do this and make it happen, even if I live in Copenhagen for a while. I've been in bands that have pretty much stopped everything as soon as someone even mentions that he or she might be moving to another city.
Johanna: That's true. Kovaa Rasvaa didn't stop even when I was living in Australia for one and a half years. Of course we didn't play together or didn't do any gigs at the time, but when I came back we continued like I was never away.
Anne: I really missed this band then. Luckily you came back. Copenhagen is a lot closer than Australia.

MRR: What are your favorite bands and influences?
Kerttu: It's impossible for me to answer this question. I listen to lots of different music and I can't think that Kovaa Rasvaa sounds exactly like something else. I can't even put my influences to our music; I wouldn't know how. I just scream and shout the way that feels right to me.
Anne: Sometimes you hear some crazy comparisons, something I couldn't think myself at all. I have no idea or plan how I want Kovaa Rasvaa to sound or how we should sound. I can't think of a single band I'd like us to sound like. It's not like I think of a good band and want to sound like say...Entombed. There's lots of good music out there, but I don't want to sound exactly like any other band.
Johanna: Actually our last five or six songs have had lots of influences from classical music. It's impossible to recognize the source, but it's still there in the riffs and some melodies might come from some very known classical pieces. There's some great Russian composers in there, stuff like Tšaikovski or Rahmaninov. I really wanted to play a song in Norway that was influenced by Peer Gynt by Edvard Grieg, but I just didn't have time before that tour. I also would like to start to hear some old thrash metal influences in our music. I've found thrash metal again. I'd love to play thrash metal well enough, but I just can't, not yet. I try to play a lot and as fast as I can, so maybe it'll start to appear in our songs sooner or later.
Kerttu: In my opinion it can be heard in the newest songs already.
Anne: I guess our looks have gone that way by accident. The other way I was looking at the pictures taken in Russia and I noticed that we looked like thrash metallers.
Kerttu: We should start to stuff our shirts inside the jeans, but no middle-aged women should ever really do that...
Otto: Whenever I play with Kovaa Rasvaa I get this old '80s thrash feeling from the music. Some of the fastest parts remind me of old grind like Terrorizer or the first Napalm Death LP. But it's not easy to name favorite bands nowadays, I just listen to such a wide selection of music.

MRR: This just might the first time ever that I've asked favorite bands and didn't get any answers.
Anne: Tšaikovski got mentioned, so I guess that's the best.
Otto: The first thing that actually came to my mind was Discharge, since it was you asking the question. Then I decided not to say it, but mentioned it after all. Discharge, Discharge, Discharge.

MRR: How about drugs and alcohol, part of the Kovaa Rasvaa daily routine?
Otto: Not really involved with Kovaa Rasvaa at all.
Johanna: Alcohol does sometimes.
Otto: We always play gigs quite sober.
Kerttu: I think alcohol has a minimal role in this band. If I'm comparing this to Khatarina times, it was quite crazy back then and we drank like maniacs. Now we have a beer here and there and that's it. It's not a big part of this band, not at all. I've been years without any alcohol, like when I was pregnant or have been breast feeding or when the kids were really small. It didn't have any effect on my life, it didn't change my activities or make me not go see gigs etc. I can enjoy rock'n'roll sober too, maybe there just aren't as many after parties...
Otto: Don't need no drugs and alcohol to be crazy.
Johanna: Alcohol is the only drug we're really using
Anne: I have a hangover right now, but that's how it is sometimes. I don't think about drinking nowadays at all. I was sober for a long time, one and a half years or so. But then started drinking again in Brasil, oops.

MRR: What are your expections from your US tour?
Kerttu: Lots of fun.
Anne: Getting rich overnight.
Otto: It's going to be great. There's lots of good things happening there now.
Johanna: I want to see all the forests and redwoods.
Kerttu: Me too.
Otto: I have lots of old friends on the west coast and it will be great to see them all!

facebook.com/KovaaRasvaa

WEST COAST TOUR

Friday, March 24: Portland, Oregon
Sunday, March 26: Seattle, WA
Monday, March 27: Chico, CA
Tuesday, March 28: San Francisco, CA
Wednesday March 29: San Jose, CA
Friday, March 31: 31 Los Angeles, CA
Saturday, April 1: Los Angeles, CA
Sunday, April 2: Oakland, CA

ROHT

Introduction and interview by Fannar Örn Karlsson.
Photo by Odin Dagur Bjarnason.

ROHT is a relatively new hardcore band from Reykjavík, Iceland. Using only drums and a bass, backed with a noise track, this husband and wife duo is in my opinion the most powerful and overwhelming band in Reykjavík. Their songs mix hard as nails mid-tempo parts and fast stompy beats, bass lines that flirt with primitive black metal and an almost powerviolence-like approach to song structure. ROHT is Júlía Aradóttir on bass, and Þórir Georg Jónsson on drums and vocals.

MRR: Iceland is not exactly known for its abundance of punk. How did you get into it?
Þórir: Punk may not be popular in Iceland but it has a fairly big legacy here. There were a handful of (mostly post-) punk bands in Iceland in the early '80s and some of our biggest pop stars kinda grew out of that so people in Iceland do love to throw the word punk around and label anything that's kinda wacky or confrontational in any way as punk. I remember hearing about punk and hearing bands like the Sex Pistols and local bands like Fræbbblarnir and Utangarðsmenn fairly young even in the tiny town I grew up in. What really got me into it though was the big pop punk explosion of '94–'95. I was ten years old and it just turned my whole world upside down. The second major turning point and what was probably the final nail in the coffin of the possibility of me growing up to have a normal life was getting the Minor Threat discography CD in the late '90s.
Júlía: I basically got into punk when I met Þórir in 2004. I started coming to local shows and got more and more into it and eventually started playing myself. Getting into punk has been one of the most important things to happen to me in my adult life.

MRR: How did this band start and why? What drove you to sound the way you sound?
Þórir: Originally it started as a recording project of mine as can be heard on our demo tape. It focused more heavily on the industrial aspect of the band but I always wanted it to be a hardcore punk band. I started brainstorming about ways to perform it live and the first person I always turn to when working on ideas is Júlía. We started thinking about the possibility of doing it only the two of us and how we could do that in a cool way. I was and have since a kid been into a lot of powerviolence bands and a lot of them had band formations different from the classic drums-guitar-bass-vocalist so we decided to try it as just a drum and bass duo with some added noise / industrial elements. The limitations of that setup has probably been the biggest influence on how we sound at the moment.
Júlía: We play in a lot of different things together but I had never been in a hardcore band until Þórir suggested I'd join ROHT, and I was super excited about his idea of the direction for the project.

MRR: But where are you coming from musically? Your music sounds like it comes from all over the place, even though you have a very specific sound. You sound like you're really mining the history of punk but at the same time you sound very modern. Can you tell me a little bit about your influences?
Þórir: It can be hard to differentiate between bands who influence you and all the other

bands we love. When we started the band we wanted to make something sonically simple and primitive and undeniably hardcore punk but try to squeeze in all the other elements we love in aggressive / dark music. To name some names some of our biggest influences are bands like Rudimentary Peni, Bauhaus, the Birthday Party and Throbbing Gristle. But we also do our best to keep up with all the sick stuff that´s going on today and a lot of that influences us as well.

MRR: ROHT's artwork is dark but pretty unconventional for a punk band. Tell me about the thinking behind the art.

Þórir: Honestly there's not much thinking behind the art in the context of the band. These are just the drawings I make and we decided we'd try to incorporate them into our artwork as they seemed to fit somehow. I guess I am going for a similar effect with my drawings as our music. Minimal but overwhelming in their own way. Simple but abstract.

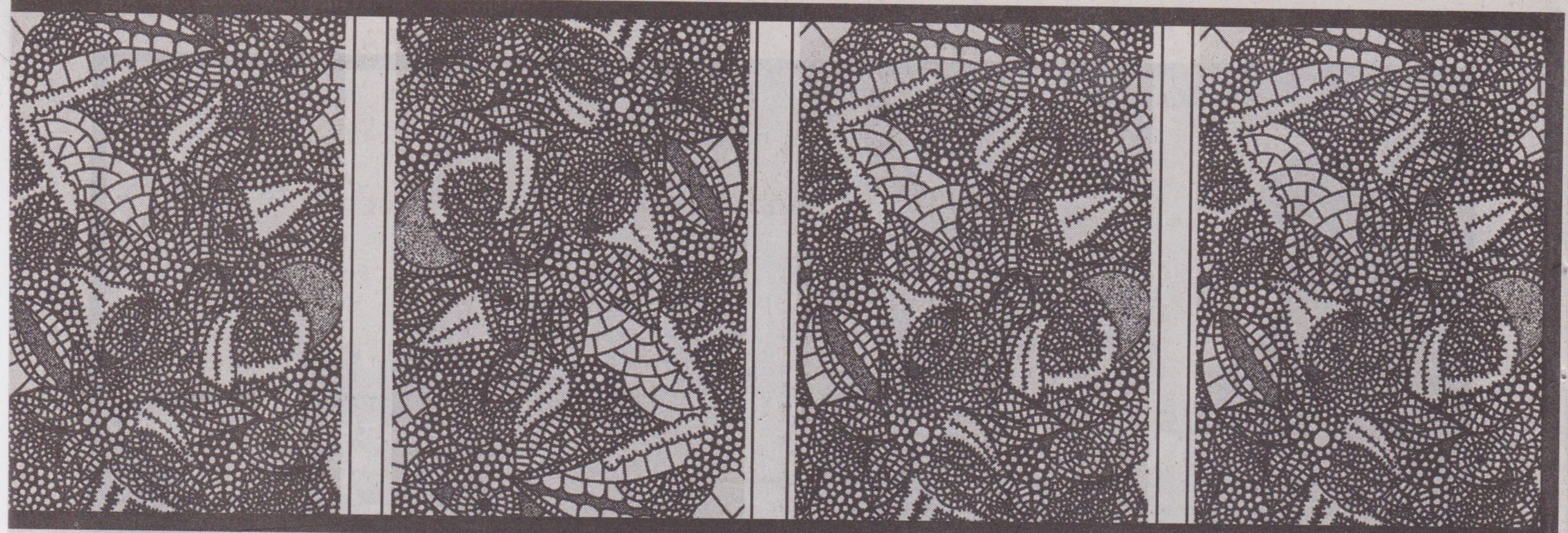
MRR: Iceland is an almost punk free country and Reykjavík's downtown is going through this massive gentrification, where most creative spaces have been replaced by hotels. What's it like being a punk and playing in a punk band in Reykjavík?

Þórir: Downtown Reykjavík has become a lot less interesting for sure. But I'm not sure how much it has affected the few punk bands here really. There has never been an abundance of places that made it easy for punk bands to do shows. Even at the height of every place in downtown Reykjavík being a venue only a couple were ever really open to doing punk shows and almost all of them have always been bars. There have been a couple of places though through the years that have been really nice and right now there doesn't seem to be a place like that so it's a little harder to do something fun but apart from a brief few year window where we had a really nice place called Kaffi Hljómalind to do shows the venue situation here has always been lacking.

Júlía: I feel like our scene is in an OK place right now. There aren't really any spaces that drive the creativity though, it's more the dedicated and hardworking people that love what they do that drive the scene. We book shows in a lot of different locations and try and not only book bar shows which can be a challenge. I think a challenge is good though, you don't want to get too comfortable and stuck doing the same thing over and over.

MRR: Where do you see yourselves in the context of other bands in Reykjavík? Do you feel a part of any particular scene or movement? Are there local bands you feel connected to at all?

Þórir: We are a part of a collective (really like a group of six people or so) called PBP but besides the bands coming out of that group of people (Börn, Dauðyflin, Kvöl to name a few) there aren't many bands I feel connected to. There are some bands I like of course that are cool to play shows with and there are scenes so to speak happening that I'm a fan of but I'm not sure I'd say I feel a connection to them. But a part of that is also just the fact that I am older than a lot of those people and



not a particularly social person.

Júlía: I obviously love Dauðyflin; they are probably my favorite Icelandic band of all time. All their stuff is so good and their shows never fail to impress and inspire. The punk scene is fairly small but there is a lot of cool stuff going on in Reykjavík that try to keep up with like the black metal and cold wave / goth scenes. I really like Hið Myrka Man (local label and bookers) and try to attend all their events. They are more focused on cold wave / goth but they book a lot of new local bands, many of whom I've never heard before I see their show, which is cool.

MRR: You guys have played in a billion bands together. In some of them you sing in English, Icelandic in others. Do you think the choice of language is important and is there a particular reason for ROHT's lyrics being in Icelandic? Is there a certain point, idea or emotion that you felt you could not express as well in English in this band?

Þórir: It's usually just the mindset I'm in when a band or a project starts that dictates the language the lyrics will be in and then I tend to just stick with the original idea. I do think the choice of language can be important within the concept of the particular band yes but in general I think people should express themselves in any way they feel comfortable with or find exciting even if their abilities may be limited. Be that the instruments they choose to play or the language they choose to write in. In ROHT I'm trying to be more direct and less abstract then I have the tendency to be. A lot of the times I'm singing about specific groups of people, places or events that happen in Iceland so it felt like a better fit.

Júlía: Most of the lyrics in ROHT are heavily anti-authoritarian and focus on current events in Iceland so I think it's fitting they are in Icelandic. Þórir and I have talked a lot about the difference between singing in English and Icelandic throughout the years and I feel like he is usually more direct when singing in Icelandic, and more abstract and even poetic when singing in English. I feel Icelandic easily becomes pretentious if you are not careful so the language forces you to be more direct, to not over flourish.

MRR: What are your lyrics about?

Þórir: They are real original. They are about politicians, the police, feeling hopeless stuck in a system that sometimes can feel like a force of nature instead of the man made construct it really is and all the mental health problems that come from growing up within that system.

MRR: It's not very common for Icelandic bands to be really political. Even punk and hardcore bands. Why do you think that is?

Þórir: I've thought about that a lot. Maybe it's the proximity. Everyone knows someone who is a cop or is in politics so they feel uncomfortable expressing views people mind find extreme publicly. It's very common for people here to go to great lengths to express how unhappy they are with how things are or how the system works but as soon as someone starts talking about changing the system in a radical way people freak out instantly. It's a very small society and people are just afraid I guess.

Júlía: It's definitely the proximity. Everybody pretty much knows everybody so calling out a specific person or an authoritative figure can easily get awkward. I try not to discuss politics at work because my co-workers usually think I'm too extreme and get offended. I think Icelandic people in general are kind of passive and are more comfortable with criticizing "the system" online rather than in person.

MRR: But do you think that proximity is an imagined problem or an actual one? I mean have you ever run into problems or been confronted at all because of lyrics? In this band or any other.

Júlía: It's probably an imagined problem, it's more a feeling of some awkwardness I guess. Awkwardness about getting too political or too radical and making people uncomfortable. Not that I mind making people uncomfortable, but I don't want to do that anytime and anyplace.

ROHT is a fairly new band and nobody really knows us in Reykjavík, so I've never been confronted about the lyrics or anything like that. But I pretty much avoid talking about my "punk self" at work or around norms. I just can't be bothered to explain myself to people all the time or argue about politics over dinner with people I know there is no way I am ever going to agree with.

Þórir: Through the years there have been occasions where I´ve been confronted about different lyrics I´ve written for different bands but always in a very mild way. Honestly people get way more offended when I've written about how boring I find the party culture here than by my politics.

MRR: What's ROHT got planned for 2017?

Þórir: We've got a 7" coming out on Iron Lung Records and a US tour in April to follow that up. We're writing new songs and plan to record them soon. And then just hopefully more touring.

roht.bandcamp.com

MOVIES

BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

We are always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146 USA. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area let us know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. We will go see it.

Director Danny Plotnick states that **I'm Not Fascinating—The Movie!** is "a tour of now defunct San Francisco." Is it ever. If you lived in San Francisco in the '90s there are so many details of that forgotten city here. It's a pure nostalgia trip for me. Of course, I also enjoy watching films from the San Francisco I never experienced. Seeing Playland At The Beach in Norman Foster's **Woman On The Run** and Orson Welles' **Lady From Shanghai** always makes me wish I had been able to go there. We had our version in Massachusetts called Paragon Park so I can sort of imagine what it was like. Fortunately there have been so many lost aspects of San Francisco captured on film. Seeing them through a combination of memory and images is always extra fun.

Of course, if you have no connection to San Francisco past or present, but are a music fan I am sure **I'm Not Fascinating—The Movie!** will resonate with you. **I'm Not Fascinating—The Movie!** is the fictional story of the San Francisco band Icky Boyfriends' unlikely rise and fall in the music business. It is filled with the usual suspects—perplexed record distributor warehouse workers, arrogant record store employees, devious record label managers plus fans, non-fans and love interests. The story of the band's sudden discovery is interwoven with their personal lives and day jobs amusingly set to the band's music. My favorite line is spoken by the Past It Records executive. He calls it "operation image improvement" which sums up the plot without really giving it away. If you don't know what it means, it's time to watch.

This is the 21st anniversary rerelease of **I'm Not Fascinating—The Movie**. The film debuted in Los Angeles at the Viper Room on Valentine's Day 1996. Of course such an auspicious premiere didn't damper its other screenings. I saw it in a garage on Guerrero Street. This release also includes an insightful and funny commentary by Plotnick and Icky Boyfriends' drummer Anthony Bedard, a bunch of deleted scenes and a few live Icky Boyfriends performances from the '90s. If you never saw them then, you need to watch these. Their reunions were awesome, but the '90s was their prime. (vimeo.com/ondemand/notfascinating)

Emily Armstrong and Pat Ivers were living in New York City working for a news station. They were also punks going see all the new bands playing around town. Since they had access to a portable video camera they began "borrowing" it to film bands at CBGBs and Danceteria. Their videos document some of the classic New York punk bands plus other great bands who came from other cities to play in New York. They recently brought their stuff to San Francisco's Yerba Buena Center for the Arts for a three day series entitled **Nightclubbing: Downtown New York 1975-80**.

I attended three of the four **Nightclubbing: Downtown New York 1975-80** screenings: "Punk & New Wave," "Modern Music," and "Greatest Hits & Interviews." "Punk & New Wave" featured performances from the Cramps, Bad Brains, Heartbreakers, Dead Boys, Bush Tetras, Suburbs, the Go-Go's and Human Sexual Response. "Modern Music" focused on No Wave with Teenage Jesus and The Jerks, James Chance and the Contortions, John Cale, Lounge Lizards and Sun Ra. "Greatest Hits & Interviews" featured more from the above plus interviews from this century. That was disappointing since I was expecting interviews from the same period as the live shoots. When Richard Hell showed up as the first interviewee I audibly groaned. He's been appearing in too many documentaries lately and it was more of the same. Fortunately, it got more interesting with those you don't see that often like Walter Lure, Jeff Magnum, Jay Dee Daugherty, Lydia Lunch and James Chance.

One of the extra special things about seeing one of Armstrong and Ivers' screenings is that they are there in person. They know all the dirt and they are willing to tell us about. I am usually annoyed by film Q&As because it is usually less about any real questions, but in this case there was much to be relayed. I even had a few questions that I never got to ask. (gonightclubbing.com)

I try to not take it personally when someone writes to *MRR* to ask if we review films. I really try not to take it personally when someone writes in to ask me to review their film when I have already reviewed it. So I will not take it personally that I received the DVD **Cleveland's Screaming** with a note saying please review. I did in 2009 and it was also one of my favorite films of that year.

I am not going to review it again, but if you haven't seen **Cleveland's Screaming** it's available as a two DVD set with a bunch of extras. It's a fun film. (redhourrecords.com)

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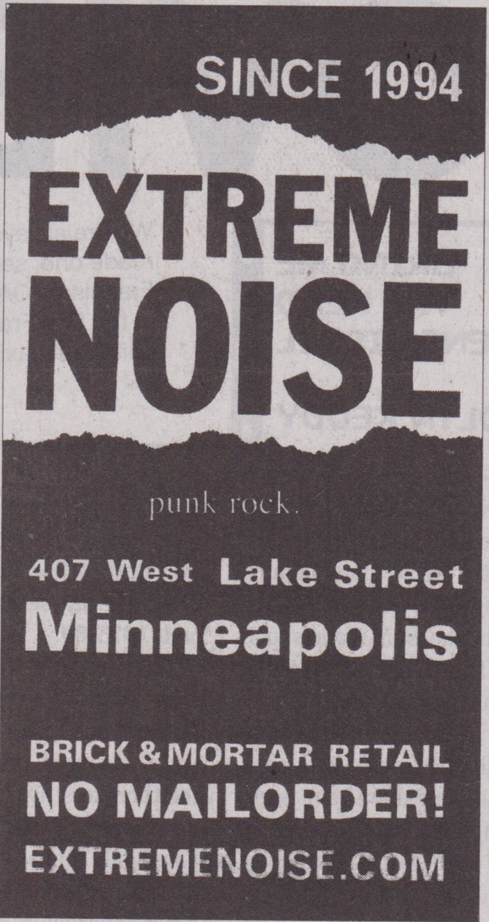
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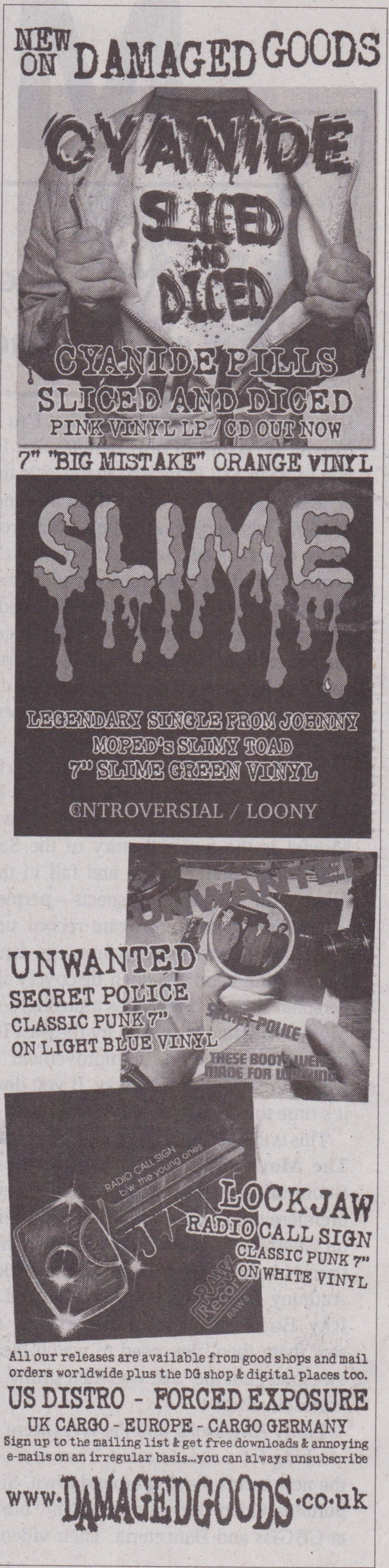
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My Damage: The Story of a Punk Rock Survivor
Keith Morris with Jim Ruland
Da Capo Press, 2016
309 pgs | $24.99

Every six months or so, I tell myself "Do *not* read any more senior citizens' punk life stories," and every six months or so a new one comes out and I fucking read it. It's not that these period pieces aren't important; I certainly see the allure of reading the story of someone who you used to see as a total badass who helped you through your teenage years by simply bashing a guitar, or singing, or just being a fucking force. I totally get it. It's just harder to wow me these days with this era and story. Even if you have a great story to tell, I've heard about 90% of it from the other three hundred punk biographies that came out in the last few years.

That being said, when I heard this book was coming out, I was intrigued. Although I knew a few facts about Keith Morris, like his tenure as the original vocalist for Black Flag, and his band of revolving musicians he called Circle Jerks, not much else stood out to me about him except this shitty interview I have undoubtedly misquoted for probably thirty years. My warped image of him drinking a cocktail poolside, slurring in an animated Valley whine, saying the reason punk happened was because classic rock was shitty and didn't speak to a sect of California teens in the late 1970s. (This is a tenet I can either agree with or disagree with, depending on my current mood.) I was pretty stoked to read the man's story and not think of him as simply a badass OG vocalist who now only did lame poolside videos talking about how classic rock sucked.The story is pretty wild. Not like the kind of wild that you'd think, though. Sure there was ridiculous partying, and dealing with Black Flag transforming from a wild, angry mess into a well oiled piece of military machinery, resulting in him severing ties with the band. There was relentless touring, heartbreak, and drama just like in every punk veteran's logbook. What I didn't expect, what I failed to remember about punk history—and feel free to call me out on this one—is how a lot of bands in that era were what many of us would consider sellouts.

I get it, I totally do. Thirty-five years ago, not everyone knew you could just bypass the huge record company and put records out yourselves. Believe me, I'm not calling every punk band from the 1970s (or any other era) who had a record on a major label a sellout. I'm not even calling Keith or his bands sellouts. There is, however, this feeling throughout the book where you realize, "Shit, this kid has had multiple bands where he was the sole original member. He sent demos out to *huge* record companies with band members who were pretty busy doing other stuff, and his whole life has been throwing bands together to impress actual, factual record executives who wanted to jump on the proudly derailing punk train."

Keith deals with some shit that we can all fully understand, like alcoholism and drug abuse, the death of loved ones, and losing friends due to bad life choices. He's also got fucking diabetes, which, honestly, should scare the shit out of any partying punk over the age of thirty. Jan (or maybe it was Dean) totally fucks his shit up, David Bowie comes to check him out, he tried his hand at producing terrible indie rock several times, and he got totally used as bait by a record bigwig to attempt to lure Fugazi into a record deal, I got turned onto his weird arty rock band, Midget Handjob (Jesus fucking Christ, that's a terrible name), and I still like Off!, so I guess Keith wins this round. You may disagree with the way he works with big money record labels, but if anything, at 61, Keith has proven to be a relentless vocalist and punk. If you aren't totally turned off by this era's story being retold (again!), it's a pretty good read.

—Ryan Modee

Feeding Time: Split Seconds in Toronto Punk, 2015–2016
Alex Kress
self-published
86 pgs

Feeding Time is a collection of about 80 mostly black and white images of Toronto punk, documented by Alex Kress. While the book itself contains no explanatory text except for a glossary of bands featured and a dedication, I gleaned online that it was meant to capture a "split second" or, a year in the Scene. This scene includes punks of all shapes and sizes and answers the question of what 2015–2016 looked like for one very specific sub-group of people in a city.

Unfortunately, the book does not answer the question of *why* it was actually made, or what exactly it was about Toronto in the mid 2010s that was really worth documenting. It consists of pretty regular pictures at some punk gigs, and otherwise has no real explanation or context. I think it might be boring to keep asking what it is about punk that is cool or worth documenting (especially in the pages of a punk magazine, no doubt) but the entire time I spent looking at this book, I couldn't help but wonder: what's the point? The photos in *Feeding Time* are nice enough; they're essentially super high contrast black and white images of a bunch of mildly attractive boys doing their best to look deranged or whatever. But there is really no context or explanation for why they were included except for the implicit understanding that these have been green-lit as Bands Deemed Socially Acceptable to Like and Document.

This is a shame, considering that Kress wrote a great article for this magazine about the closing of beloved Toronto venue S.H.I.B.G.B's. In that piece, we could have found the context that *Feeding Time* so disappointingly lacks. In its current form, the book does little besides

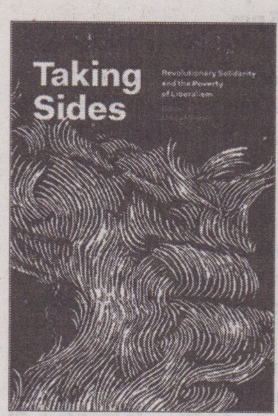
suggest that Toronto is a fun city for punk, instead of proffering a history that has the potential to be more specific, nuanced and informative.The groups chosen seemed like a weird cross section of both local and non-local, inexplicably put together except maybe to show that Canada also has "cool" shows that have been approved by the Gatekeepers of Punk in general North America. Sure, there is diversity, but it doesn't stray too far from the already acceptable narrative of what's going on today (which, in the punk tradition of worshipping people who never needed to be worshipped, I think I can put in writing that I never need to see another photo of Glue again).

This narrative includes many images from Not Dead Yet 2015, which is now thankfully immortalized forever in book form alongside its countless other vehicles for documentation. Not Dead Yet is great, don't get me wrong. It's probably the most fun I had at a music festival ever. However, this year, the same photographer shot images from the fest, on assignment for non-commercial publications *MRR* and *The Media* but somehow also for *VICE*? This only further confirms my suspicion that *Feeding Time* might be better as a Facebook album or *Noisey* article rather than an actual book. One Toronto resident said that it was "like being in high school and getting your copy of the yearbook," which makes perfect sense but also doesn't explain why you would really need a copy unless you were a part of it. My theory is that punks spent all their high school years being freaks* and not included in their yearbook so maybe this is their time to shine?

We should make books to tell stories and sadly *Feeding Time* seems to be telling the same story that everyone already knows. The book would have greatly benefitted from the photographer's insightful words on the Toronto scene, but instead we are left to our own devices to ponder what exactly it is about punk that we even care about.

**Except all the handsome white dudes who are actually totally well-adjusted and chose punk as a hobby to become more fuckable or whatever.*

—Jolie Maya-Altshuler



Taking Sides: Revolutionary Solidarity and the Poverty of Liberalism
Edited by Cindy Milstein
AK Press, 2015
162 pgs | $12.00

Prior to the book's publication, the bulk of the thirteen essays included within *Taking Sides: Revolutionary Solidarity and the Poverty of Liberalism* were originally organized and printed as a zine (*Revolutionary Solidarity: A Critical Reader for Accomplices*) and freely distributed by the book's editor, Cindy Milstein, during a series of solidarity actions for Ferguson in the San Francisco Bay Area in 2014. The expanded collection includes writing from a great diversity of sources, offering narratives geared toward building and understanding revolutionary solidarity, responsible and strategic leadership, and finding ways of moving forward in building a resilient and sound collective infrastructure via a systematic disassembly of long-standing flawed archetypes.

These works felt urgent in the immediate aftermath of Ferguson. That same urgency has perhaps never ebbed amidst the seemingly ceaseless torrents of the Amerikkkan reality, but nonetheless feels all the more pertinent considering the political climate we are currently faced with, a political climate in which even the most apathetic and otherwise widely indifferent are feeling a sense of panic, a call to at least some avenue of action, whatever that might entail. *Taking Sides* is an excellent resource for both those who have been long-active in organizing and revolutionary struggle as well as those who are hoping to contribute, to be active and engaged, but aren't sure of the most effective ways they can participate in productive, meaningful, and collectively beneficial means.

The essays contained in *Taking Sides* ask very difficult questions, and ones that often lack a simple or contained solution. Not all of the essays agree with one another, nor do they intrinsically align. Therein lies the nature of the work, not as flawed or inconsistent, but as thorough, complex, and profoundly important. Milstein states of the essays: "What the contributions in this anthology do agree on is the need to concentrate our organizing efforts squarely on questions of power. They assert that we must unearth, contest, and aim to dismantle all manifestations and structures of hierarchical power, wherever we find them, including when they appear in our movements."

Building and understanding genuine solidarity is a primary aim of the work, learning how to transform disagreements from being a disruptive, fracturing force to a catalyst of collective empowerment. Milstein writes: "These essays each wrestle in their own way with the dilemma of how to thwart murderous forms of social control while retaining our humanity. In doing so, they form a dialogue that models how we might intelligently converse and act in comradely concert with each other outside the pages of this book."

In "Brave Motherfuckers," Michael Staudenmaier provides a cursory but effective historical backdrop to many of the issues and debates that the collected essays within *Taking Sides* address. Staudenmaier, a seasoned activist, historian, and author of *Truth and Revolution: A History of the Sojourner Truth Organization, 1969-1986*, emphasizes the importance of debate and disagreement in resistance movements as critical components that ultimately lend themselves to greater empowerment and unification if navigated effectively, and not seen as unassailable impasses. Drawing examples from radical groups such as Chicago's Rainbow Coalition of the late '60s, Love and Rage, and the Ejercito Zapatista de Liberación Nacional (EZLN), Staudenmaier illustrates ways in which groups were able to focus on the shared goals between often vastly different groups, approaching ideas of solidarity much akin to contemporary discourses of intersectionality. He shows how these groups have negotiated those differences into a positive and powerful collective inertia, the alternative (and the unfortunate narrative of countless resistance groups through time both near and in the recent past) being dissolution and fragmentation as a result of being unable to overcome disagreements and disputes. As Staudenmaier muses after traveling to Ferguson, MO with his family in the immediate weeks following Michael Brown's tragic murder at the hands of Officer Darren Wilson, and observing the potency of the employment of multiple tactics, "People in struggle disagree with each other, and those disagreements can change the world."

In Delio Vasquez' essay, "The Poor Person's Defense of Riots," one finds an excellent rebuttal to the seemingly inveterate and tiresome critique(s) of violence, property damage, or other more direct forms of action that invariably arise in the midst of resistance struggles. Striking a chord reminiscent of the often backwards and hindering roles of white paternalism through and beyond the 1960s civil rights era, one will always encounter the (oft-misguided and ultimately uninformed) plea for non-violence as the only viable dictate in finding *peaceful* resolve. What these voices fail to acknowledge or even attempt to understand is that, more often than not, it is the work of those willing to take that extra step, putting their lives on the line and bringing a corporeal element into the equation, that grant authority to the more centrally-aligned aims of the movement. Vasquez states: "Political change does not, and never has, come about through peaceful protest alone. All tactics of course play a role—and riots, the threat of violence, and violence itself are frequently the context and background that situate as well as frame the force and effectiveness of more mainstream,

moderate, and agreed-on tactics."

This base level disagreement on tactics, as can be observed countlessly within movements over time, results in unnecessary splintering, bickering, and ultimately distraction from the central issue(s) at hand. Emphasized again by Vasquez, "Ultimately, then, we do ourselves a disservice when we attack others for doing the important political work that we ourselves are not willing to do—work that in fact allows us to do what we do."

At the center of many of the works contained in *Taking Sides* is the notion of solidarity. Not solidarity in a vague or arbitrary sense, but as Milstein conveys, solidarity as a weapon, a verb, and a form of love. Further, "…solidarity, to have any meaning in practice, demands active empathy at its foundation." The essays "A Critique of Ally Politics" and "Accomplices Not Allies" dig into the often convoluted meshwork of ideas surrounding what it means for one to consider themselves a true "ally" within a specific movement; technicalities, archetypal roles, and finding clear distinction between an *ally* and an *accomplice*. While an unversed reader might mark some of the distinctions covered as seemingly superfluous, a key component in seeking to build real and tangible solidarity within and beyond immediate movements is this notion of self-scrutiny; questioning oneself and those within your immediate sphere. Understand yourself, your surroundings, and what meaning can be deduced from each intention, however subtle or direct. Question the motives of nonprofits and NGOs taking a visible, forefront role in social movements. Are the voices at the forefront of struggles representative of the groups being impacted directly by specific or systemic forms of oppression, violence, and exploitation? In Harsha Walia's essay "Decolonize Together," she uses a quote by American author, feminist, and social activist bell hooks to distinguish between notions of solidarity and support: "Solidarity is not the same as support. To experience solidarity, we must have a community of interests, shared beliefs and goals around which to unite, to build Sisterhood. Support can be occasional. It can be given and just as easily withdrawn. Solidarity requires sustained, ongoing commitment."

For those just now entering the arena, what can be learned from those who have been organizing, demonstrating, and putting their lives on the line for years? How can this knowledge be transmitted and discussed in such a way that is truly effective, and not ultimately resigned to pugnacity or passive combativeness? How can those from the mainstream, suddenly feeling somehow "radicalized" in the wake of the latest nightmare on Amerikkka's political front, contribute in a meaningful way, and not merely assert their own egos and privilege in ways that ultimately only serve to silence the specific experiences of others (i.e. "all lives matter", and similar copout charades)?

It might perhaps be more apt to think of *Taking Sides* as less of a textbook narrative than a sentient and dynamic conversation. The topics addressed are multifarious and yet invariably essential. Whether historical or immediate, they are also products of the present—living and urgent, and delivered from a vast assemblage of perspectives, all voiced from the front lines of struggles ultimately seeking largely convergent aims. These issues aren't presented to the reader as sharp and clean resolves to deeply complicated debates. They're meant to be engaged with, deliberated over, and discussed, on individual and collective levels, and carried away from the realm of the theoretical into the tangible.

"The choice is not between danger and safety, but rather between the uncertain dangers of revolt and the certainty of a world with no future." –Tipu's Tiger Writing Collective, "Dangerous Allies"

—Morgan Stickrod

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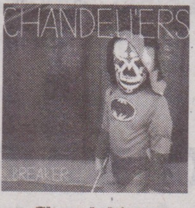

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ABNORMI / VIIMEINEN KOLONNA – split EP

It's always a pleasure to see new VIIMEINEN KOLONNA material and it seems like the band has been a bit more active recently than they have been in the last couple of years, which is great news. These five tracks are full of confrontational energy, toeing the line between hardcore and crust, driven by a nasty guttural bass, occasional blastbeats, and furious vocals. ABNORMI offer up six tracks of straightforward '80s-influenced hardcore with hints of BGK, SOB, and even a bit of 'CIMEX in the string-bending leads. (AU)
(Blame the Victim / Filthy Rat / Insane Society)

ACCIDENTE – "Pulso" LP

High-octane Madrid pop punk with an edge. Endless catchy hooks and vocal harmonies at a breakneck speed. I can easily visualize the circle pit full of smiles these punks illicit. Musically they're some kind of mixture of MARKED MEN and MASSHYSTERI, but with the vocal sensibilities of the SOVIETTES. Or imagine if DISCOUNT drank several pots of coffee, consumed several oversized novelty pixie sticks, and learned to speak Spanish. A super fun LP that will make you wanna pogo your head off! (FS)
(Chaos Rural / Dirt Cult / Exabrupto / Inhumano / No Friends / Sentimientos de Lucha / Vox Populi)

AIR HUNGER – "Raise the Flag and Look to the Skies / Mother One Day I Will Be You"

Two-song EP of grooving and driving goth rock from members of ZEX, CEMETERY, and BLUE CROSS among others. Apparently this is a transatlantic project with folks from North America and Europe. The music is well-written and the synths add a nice touch if you're into that sort of thing. The vocals are affected and hit almost every note of the song, as if they're following along rather than leading, which kind of bothers me. Pretty good, nothing amazing. (JC)
(Occult Whispers)

LÊ ALMEIDA – "Todas As Brisas" LP

This is a strange band. LÊ ALMEIDA is from Rio de Janiero, Brazil. Their music is fuzzy, lo-fi indie rock. There are marching drums and swirling guitars, creating a dreamy soundscape. The vocals are twee, but the accent and Portuguese language add a bit of mystery making them more intriguing. Plus the lyrics are more whispered than sang. It's odd and really interesting. I like it. (CK)
(IFB / Transfusão Noise)

ALTERED BEAST – "S.O.S." EP

ALTERED BEAST reminds me of *Cybergod*-era NAUSEA. Throw in some breakdowns (which remind me of MERAUDER) and some crucial speed-picking (which is more in line with CORROSION OF CONFORMITY) and you get this EP. A really solid offering from these Midwest ragers. Heavy and crushing. (MW)
(Blak Skul)

BAD BAD – LP

Like 1979 punks on a psilocybin excursion, Oakland's BAD BAD imagine a world where MAGAZINE shared bills with HAWKWIND (if you are writing in to say this actually happened I will only accept the original flyers as proof) or where JAY REATARD lived long enough to turn his sharp, dynamic pop songs into ten-minute freakout jams. I favor brevity in my reviews but I feel like if I kept going here I could write a lot more. But I won't. (AM)
(S-S)

BAD MOJOS / KICK IT! – split EP

Angst collision! Don't gotta dig too deep to see where either of these German bands are coming from. KICK IT! is extremely genuine, idealistic hardcore, lambasting intolerance and advocating for inclusive pits where punks of all stripes can frolic freely. Far more charming than it is memorable, sadly. BAD MOJOS ups the degenerate quotient considerably with fuzzy shit-fi odes to sexual frustration and deviant criminal vomiting. Immediately reminiscent of BUCK BILOXI, though the smarts are largely supplanted by tough-guy shite. Not an overt bummer though, making half of this platter at least tolerable. (MC)
(Kink)

THE BARE MINIMUM – "Sink to the Top" CD

If Epitaph had found financial success putting out candied-up NWOBHM bands alongside their other 21st century output, the BARE MINIMUM would have drawn from both camps. Just the thing to clear out the bar after last call, or if people aren't evacuating somewhere fast enough. (DG)
(self-released)

BATTLESCARD – "Blasting High-Charge" CD

Those of you who were, like me, wowed by the *Motorcharge* demo…take a deep breath. These Yokohama rippers have taken great strides since that 2012 tape, and they have firmly planted their feet on the "metal" side of their self-applied MetalPunk descriptor. The roots are still Japanese hardcore, but *Blasting High-Charge* is packed with solos and speed picking and maximum speed metal power. It's a natural progression from the demo, and to simply say that it rips would be a great understatement. (WN)
(self-released)

BB EYE – "Texas Chainsaw Mascara" EP

Little bit of the WAD and a little bit of WARM BODIES, and definitely an irresistible pogo time. SPARKS as demented Saturday morning cartoons, but also some goofed up chaos with a hysterical valley girl singing. There are some organs, drums, and guitars teetering on the edge of a circus along with some sarcastic scream singing, a real total freak show. It's all hits, but "Big Cicada" is the hit. (MM)
(Lumpy)

BEARTRAP / HUMMINGBIRD OF DEATH – split EP

This 5" record only has about a quarter of an inch of noise-producing grooves on each side, and these freaks manage to cram seventeen songs onto it. HUMMINGBIRD OF DEATH contribute twelve of these, with bursts of blastbeat fury clocking in at about five seconds each. Like a hummingbird they dart this way and that and are gone before you know it. BEARTRAP only has five songs, giving them a few more seconds to bust out some sick hardcore riffs before blasting to the moon. They remind me a bit of CHARLES BRONSON with abridged songs. Overall, it's a fine exercise in grindcore one-liners. (BA)
(Give Praise / Here and Now! / Riotous Outburst / To Live a Lie)

THE BELLICOSE MINDS – "The Creature" LP

The BELLICOSE MINDS are back, serving up more PDX-style gloom with CHRISTIAN DEATH-influenced vocals on this surprisingly danceable goth album. If you haven't heard them yet, they're in the same company as current bands like ARCTIC FLOWERS and SPECTRES or more old school stuff like PINK TURNS BLUE and ASYLUM PARTY. "The Creature" is definitely the breakout hit with the coolest drum noises, but "Orwell's Troops" is a close second with strangled barks leaping out of sonic fog. The entire album is solid, and there are layers of beautiful guitar throughout. My sole criticism is that I wish the BELLICOSE MINDS (and all contemporary goth bands!) would push themselves to be less vague with their imagery. Stop speaking about faceless authorities and dystopian landscapes—we're living in a dystopia, and our dissent will be far more powerful when we get better at describing our enemies. (AB)
(Black Water)

BENTON – "Konsky Kokot" CD

Here we have some very metallic crust out of Slovakia with a heavy emphasis on the metallic part. Like, hella double bass and tremolo picking. It's essentially an old school death metal album without that many guitar solos. Reminds me of OBITUARY, but with some D-beat parts. Now all of that is cool by me, but what about you? Are you crust enough to be metal? Get this and find out. (BA)
(Heavy Metal Vomit Party / Neanderthal Stench / Phobia / Veva)

BILLY BOYS – "Buzz Baby Buzz" EP

So not what I was expecting! Finland's BILLY BOYS were last active in the '80s, and now they've returned decades later with some tripped out psychedelic punk recorded at the infamous Ikbals Studios. Shit is weird ass minimal drone zone with infectious SUICIDE-like vox. The flip is more deranged. Real unique sound here—most bands like this use synthesizers and drum machines, but they achieve similar sonics with live drums and guitar effects. Great shit, hits that sweet spot if you like your minimal wave extra menacing. (GB)
(Joteskii Groteskii)

BILLY BOYS – "Ghost City" EP

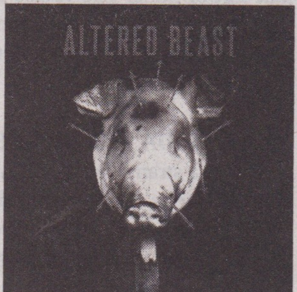
Let's kick things off with some spine-tingling ghostly echo-chamber murmurs. Then in comes the beat topped with a swingy and smooth melody, but not without more ghosts flying back and forth from speaker to speaker. This time the ghosts are monk-like; imagine ENIGMA but simpler and sped up. Everyone remembers ENIGMA right? You know on the SAMHAIN records when Danzig has that weird demonic pitch-shifter effect on his voice? That's going on here too. The platter closes with what could be a half a second of a creepy carnival tune on repeat. If you like to throw on weird experimental stuff while doing the weird things you do, this is your jam. It will likely creep everyone else out. (MA)
(Joteskii Groteskii)

BITTER GROUNDS – "Hollowlands" CD

The stickers that came with this release proclaim "punk, ska, dirty reggae." Not quite sure of the definition of the latter, but this Dutch quartet (two guitars, bass and drums—no hint of any horns or keys of any description), can certainly skank with the best of them. Very reminiscent of OPERATION IVY on the more punker bits, and CULTURE SHOCK on the ska and reggae stuff, both of which I reckon are the benchmarks for this particular genre. They really do attack (if that's the right word to use for some of the more laid-back efforts) the styles with poise, grace, and gusto, making it all sound wonderfully effortless, languid, and up-tempo, all at the same time! Most excellent. (RK)
(Ring Of Fire)

BIZNAGA – "Sentido del Espectáculo" LP

Sometimes you just can't help but use cliché metaphors to describe something. After all, they're only cliché because they're accurate so often. BIZNAGA is a band with one foot planted in "the now" and one foot planted in 1977. This Spanish band has a sound that comes across as fresh and current, yet so many aspects of their music are an obvious wink to classic first wave punk bands. Imagine if GENERACION



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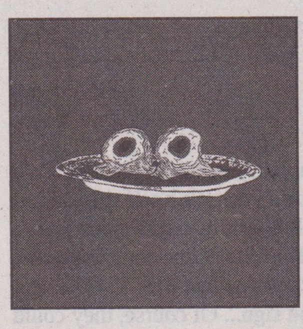
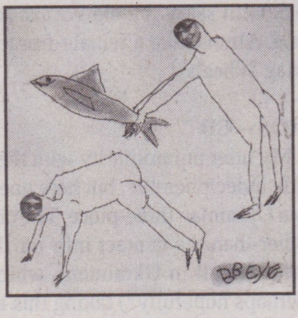




SUICIDA really wanted to sound more like the BUZZCOCKS. It seems like many punks only care about the punk that was created 30 years ago, or in the last 30 days—with this album you get both. (FS)
(Slovenly)

BLANK SPOTS – LP
I was gonna say this SF three-piece did their homework, but I guess the bass player was in New Zealand's legendary NO TAG in the '80s, so they apparently *are* the homework. This classic anthemic Cali hardcore / punk sound is pretty easy for both bands and studios to fuck up and descend into snowboard rock zones, so I'm stoked these guys managed to keep it raw and real in the studio with that timeless punky edge like the STITCHES or even ADOLESCENTS. Admittedly not a sound I find myself returning to often, but BLANK SPOTS certainly do it better than most. Green wax. (GB)
(Blank Spots / Green Recordings)

BLEEDING GUMS – "II" EP
One downside of being one of the best live hardcore bands in the US is that there's a good chance that the live experience won't translate to your records, but BLEEDING GUMS's first foray onto polyvinyl chloride is at least 90% there. The palpable energy and boomy, in-the-red recording definitely offer a glimpse at the force of their live set. Following a two-riff intro that sets everything in place, BLEEDING GUMS kick out eight more tracks of garage hardcore that's rowdy, raging, and tight as hell; it sounds like a band playing mid-paced songs as fast as they can without compromising power. The vocals both croon and howl, and suggest someone losing their mind and falling over everything, and the drumming in particular is absolutely devastating, and will make you want to shake your body with every kick beat and overdriven cymbal blast. Bands like this are what keep me excited about punk every time I think I'm done. Please do a West Coast tour with Q and RADIATION RISKS. I'll take the week off of work. (DG)
(Neck Chop)

BOAK / DEADBEAT – split EP
In grindcore, as in life, sometimes it's not about what you do, but how you do it. DEADBEAT doesn't really do anything wrong, but their by-the-numbers grind metal does little to impress. They sound like they could be an early act at Deathfest. I mean it's fine and all, but I already forgot what they sound like. BOAK on the other hand has that total raw madness that I'm looking for in a grind band. The drummer really pushes this one over the top. It's like somewhere between käng and early NAPALM DEATH. The riffs are nothing new, but their execution makes BOAK killer, and this record a winner! (BA)
(To Live a Lie)

THE BOMBPOPS – "Fear Of Missing Out" CD
A pretty great pop punk release from this Southern California band. Two gal singer / guitar players and a great rhythm section have really put it all together on this one. The slower songs remind me on the UNLOVABLES and the faster ones remind me classic early BLINK. This band can also bring the rock when it wants to with speed and riffs. I've seen them live over the recent years but seeing them last weekend at their Bay Area record release show was on another level. Even Rodney Bingenheimer is playing them! "Be Sweet" is on repeat for me. Definitely a top ten release for 2017. (RL)
(Fat)

BRODY'S MILITIA – "Funeral Arrangements" EP
Kentucky's finest return with a straight up twenty-one-songs-on-a-7" motherfucking grindcore magnum opus and, yes, it fucking *kills*. You get titles like "Invocation of Obscene Gods," "Abortion Enthusiast," "Stench of Pretentious Vegan," and "Fecal Altars." Fucking hilarious. My favorites are "Failure after Failure" with its "Sweet Leaf" riffs and the ultra punky "Pigs In Concrete." Not just a throwaway novelty recorded but a fully realized enjoyable listening experience. Good work, men! (RO)
(Rescued From Life)

CAPITLE – "Greatest Hits Vol. 1" EP
The sticker on the front indicates that this band formed in 1981. Before I read the rest of the blurb, I started to listen to the record and sort of assumed that it had been recorded back then. Turns out, the band reformed in 2013 after one of the original members died. Outside of the production being a little too polished for the early '80s, it really does sound as if it could have been recorded back then. This is classic early hardcore. I wouldn't say it's the best hardcore I've ever heard, but it's a perfect example of that early sound, with a certain herky-jerky thing that reminds me of the CIRCLE JERKS. Seven songs in eight minutes? This thing is made for my attention span. (KK)
(Cacophone)

CAREER SUICIDE – "Machine Response" LP
Along with an identically-titled EP (with completely different songs), this LP marks the first new material from Toronto hardcore institution CAREER SUICIDE since 2008. They're fully past middle age in the lifespan of a hardcore band, and some of the songs on this LP slow it down a bit and incorporate piano from Dallas Good of the SADIES and guest guitar leads courtesy of Souichi Hisatake from G.I.S.M., GUDON, INSANE YOUTH, and FORWARD. "Tighten the Screws" and "Total Neglect" are relentlessly catchy mid-paced ditties, though the double-tracked vocals and forced rhymes are grating to my ears. On the whole, most of this is more of the same ol' CAREER SUICIDE. If you're a fan who has been patiently waiting for more and loved 2008's *Cherry Beach*, you'll probably dig this. (SW)
(Deranged)

CENTURY PALM – "Meet You" LP
British Columbia's premier hardcore label embraces de-evolution with CENTURY PALM's proto-new-wave brand of punk. Side A begins with blank, robotic pop in the vein of DEVO or SERVOTRON, then closes with "Sick Of It," veering into VOIDOIDS-via-ROXY MUSIC sax mania. The songs on the flip represent a pleasing amalgam of non-

AOR, non-hippie '70s rock influences. 2017: the year the forbidden triumvirate of synthesizers, saxophones, and Stratocasters falls into favor? (AM)
(Deranged)

CEREAL KILLER – "Demos" EP
Here's another one that some of the folks behind AUSMUTEANTS and LEATHER TOWEL have pinched out for those of us in the northern hemisphere. Deeply puerile and obnoxious hardcore punk seems to be the name of the game, blending some ripping *New York Thrash* stylings and rudimentary hard rock riffage, à la an attempted cover of "Supertouch" sloshed in over-the-counter cough syrup and improvised inhalants. It's hard to tell who (if anybody) is playing what here, but it sounds like one guitar on this recording is devoted to squealing out leads and playing the rest of the chords in the wrong key using the neck of a soda bottle. It sounds great. No lyrics sheet in this package, just a drawing of the band's mascot being pulled out of a horse's ass. (EW)
(Anti Fade / Neck Chop)

CHEAP CASSETTES – "All Anxious, All The Time" CD
This is a reissue of this power pop band's 2014 release with two added tracks including a cover of the VIBRATORS's "Whips and Furs." From the Northwest, this trio has a good PLIMSOULS and PAUL COLLINS retro quality. These former DIMESTORE HALOES end up on a good East Coast rock'n'roll label this time around. (RL)
(Rum Bar)

CHEST PAIN – "The Primate's Advantage" EP
This one is an uncivilized bludgeoning of savage sludgy grindcore. Like a rabid chimp chasing you with a femur bone. Side A is a brutally damaged dirge questioning humankind's exceptionalism, while side B is an unintelligible feeding frenzy of primal grindcore smashing. These guys are along the same lines as fellow missing link band PRIMITIVE MAN, but are less experimental and more straight-up grind. Neanderthals take note. (BA)
(Crucificados Pelo Sistema / Mind Ripper Collective / To Live a Lie)

THE CHICA NEGRA – "The Luck Of The Seven" CD
Oooh! A weird horror punk band made up of old timers from goddamn Tennessee? I wanna hear that shit! Unfortunately, I think this is way too early an effort. There were a few fun, spooky songs, but the majority of this CD felt like they went straight to the studio at their friend Brad's house right after they barely learned the songs at practice. You can tell the singer has a really killer voice, but she sounds pretty damn restrained and not very energetic here. About half these songs would have made this a fun demo, and I'm sure they're fun live, but this fell flat. (DZ)
(Mystery School)

CHROME REVERSE – "They Wanna Fight!" LP
I just love this band. After three excellent EPs, here's the debut album from these Parisian rockers. Old time-ish rockabilly meets '60s garage rock with sassy female vocals. It sounds vintage, yet new at the same time. Almost like a female-fronted CRAMPS. It's fantastic. (CK)
(Mag Wheels)

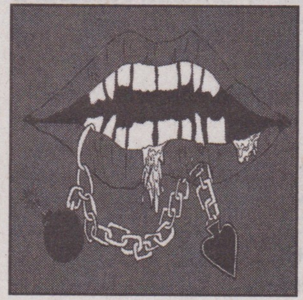
CIOS – CD
My utter unfamiliarity with the venerable Cyrillic script makes this a little indecipherable, but here goes. It appears that it's a self-titled effort by a Ukrainian three-piece. The only English writing on the entire sleeve (other than the contact info for the label) is one of the song titles (the lyrics are all in Ukrainian), which is "Rock Against The R.A.C." I'm (perhaps hopefully?) taking this as a good sign... Of course, they could be staunch anti-monarchists, and have a particular beef with the Royal Automobile Club (the UK equivalent of AAA), but I have hope (and, needless to say, hate royalty as much as fascists). Aurally, they tread the road of modern melodic streetpunk—certainly way more RANCID and BLITZ than the COCKNEY REJECTS. Not so gruff vocals, driving tempos, and even some nice keyboards to add a bit more harmony in a track or two. Pretty damn good all round. (RK)
(Miravoice)

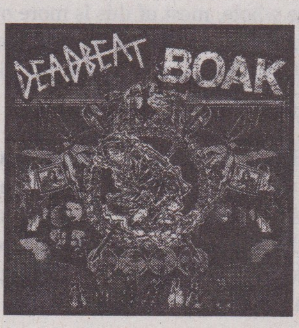
CIOS / ДОКТОР БОРМЕНТАЛЬ – "Добро Должно Быть С Кулаками" split 45
On this release, two bands from the Ukraine took the same title (which translates to "Good should be with fists") and wrote two different songs for a split record. CIOS plays gruff, melodic street punk that approaches anthemic choruses. They're probably a lot of fun to see live. ДОКТОР БОРМЕНТАЛЬ (DOKTOR BORMENTAL) follows in the same suit, but is far more bouncy and has a bit of a metallic edge...even some gang vocals that sound good in this environment. Not bad. (GH)
(Miravoice)

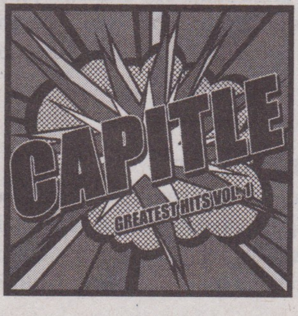
COLFAX SPEED QUEEN – "Talk to Your Doctor" LP
The cover of this LP makes it look like an early '00s fastcore record (think WHAT HAPPENS NEXT? / LIFE'S HALT), but what I found was sleazy, drug-ingesting (or so they say) circus organ garage rock with all of the bite of the WOGGLES. I wish they had the bite of the SONICS. Overall, it's solid, recorded well and harmless, but nothing pulls me in for repeated listens. (GH)
(Heavy Dose)

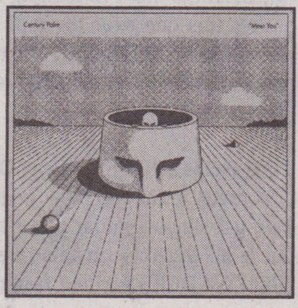
THEE COMMONS – "Demolición / Miel Por Mal"
An excellent cover of LOS SAICOS 1965 hit "Demolición." It's a wild, catchy rocker. But it's easy to cover a great song. "Miel Por Mal" slows it down for a surfy garage ballad. The singer sensually whispers the lyrics while the band settles into the groove with flourishes of reverb-laden guitar. It also sounds very nice. (CK)
(Heavy Dose)

CONCEALED BLADE – LP
In college, this total derelict we knew came into possession of some totally killer M100s ("That's a quarter stick of dynamite, bro!") and my friends, being the fun loving, *Simpsons*-obsessed adolescents









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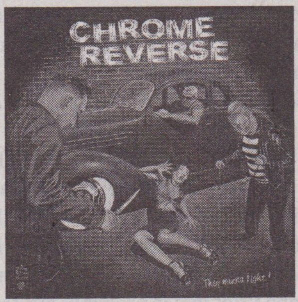
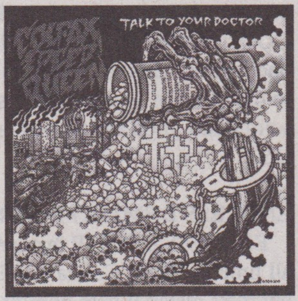




that they were, made the decision to light 'em and flush 'em down a toilet. My only regret now is that this LP wasn't out and spinning the minute we realized that, instead of the exciting gush of water we had expected, an entire wall exploded, along with the shrapnel from the toilet, and the bent and broken pieces of the cast iron plumbing. I imagine, as we all ducked to avoid the large objects rushing towards our bodies, the breakdown from "Future Killers" would be transitioning into "Fuck to Survive" and, as we split the premises as fast as we could, "Social Suicidal" would just start coming in. What I'm getting at is that this record is a fucking explosion. Not easily classifiable, but all raging, made up of nods to KISS, excessive use of dive bombs (to the point where they cease to be an accent, but an instrument in and of themselves), Midwestern knuckle-dragging fury à la NEGATIVE APPROACH, and burly vocals that remind me of Paul Bearer of SHEER TERROR. This is already a contender for best record of the year. For fans of: the string of moments that usher you into the cold world of adulthood, escaping prosecution, hitting up the 7-11. (MW)
(Beach Impediment)

THE CONNECTION – "Just For Fun!" CD
Just For Fun! is an appropriate title for a covers album. I'll add the caveat that they mean for the band, probably not the audience. Straightforward covers of DICTATORS, SYLVAIN SYLVAIN, CHEAP TRICK, BUDDY HOLLY, ROLLING STONES, and others. The lineup is described as "including a slew of special guest veterans from the hey day when pop punk ruled the fanzines, record shelves, and airwaves." You've been warned. (CK)
(Rum Bar)

CORRECTIVE MEASURE – "No Acceptance" EP
B+ youth crew from Maine. Double-time fast parts, good to great riffs, good instrument tones, and everything is tight. I don't really like gruff vocals with this style, but it's not too much of a distraction. I would definitely mosh. (DG)
(Atomic Action / Refuse)

CRACK UNDER PRESSURE – "Uneasy Peace" EP
This is some warp speed powerviolence from Germany. All go, all the time. The minimal breakdowns are only a courtesy. You can tell that during those long seconds of mosh time the band is just itching to go nuts again. These guys would probably be content falling into a blastbeat cyclone, and floating into oblivion. If you're pissed off, and you want to get worked into a frenzy, then this is your kind of shit. (BA)
(Regurgitated Semen)

DAVIDIANS – "City Trends" LP
First LP from this Raleigh group, and if it reminds you at all of DOUBLE NEGATIVE it might be because three out of four of them used to play in that band. DAVIDIANS are more devoted to the unpredictable noise rock that the former group would lurch into from time to time. I'm usually averse to bands where everyone is too talented for their own good but the guitar playing on this LP manages to actually sound pretty unhinged. On a track like "PPTW" he springs from one line to the next in a way that sounds almost improvised or even accidental. It's a cacophonous and dense record overall, but one with a lot of momentum and a running time of less than eighteen minutes, enough to make you want to keep it in rotation. (EW)
(Sorry State)

DEATHRAID – "The Year The Earth Struck Back" LP
Fuck, y'all know what to expect from DEATHRAID at this point: catchy, heavy crusty hardcore from a gang of total lifers, complete with insightful lyrics and at least two or three mixtape-worthy standouts per record. Musical highlights include the blazing, MOTÖRHEAD worship of "No Company," a track that showcases DEATHRAID at their rock'n'roll best that easily competes with the best of INEPSY, BURNING LEATHER, or SNÄGGLETOOTH in the pantheon of MOTÖR-punk, and the crust-meets-BURNING WITCH slog of "I Am No One." The best of the bunch is the album-closing "Horrid Deeds," which joins a furious DISRUPT-style sub-grind assault to a eviscerating lyrical treatment of American evangelicals' role in the creation of Uganda's "Kill the Gays" legislation. That DEATHRAID can remain as prolific as they are and exercise the level of quality control that they do is absolutely awe-inspiring. Hats off to another monster LP. (AU)
(Agipunk)

DEBELI PRECJEDNIK / MASINKO – split CD
Six tracks apiece from two Croatian bands. Musically, geographically speaking, they're firmly rooted in Southern California. DEBELI PRECJEDNIK lean heavily on the melodic indie rock end of punk à la AUTOMATIC7, while MASINKO draw liberally, and enthusiastically from where BAD RELIGION clashes (that's a deliberate pun, there, folks) with RANCID All good and well, I reckon (RK)
(Moonlee)

DILDOZER / DIRTY KILLS – split LP
Starting off with DILDOZER, I can't tell if I love it or hate it because it's so stupid. It's '90s style pop punk that doesn't really give a fuck, but is still played well and has enough self awareness to avoid 100% cheesiness. It's catchy and has a certain charm, yet dumb, like all of your favorite pop-punk shitz. DIRTY KILLS are in a similar vein, but maybe have less self-awareness. They play catchy, semi-raspy pop punk with lyrics about drinking, hangovers, failed relationships, trains going by, touring, etc, etc. It reads like an early issue of *Cometbus*. Still, it has hooks and is rough enough around the edges to keep your interest if pop punk is your thing. (GH)
(self-released)

DIRTY KID DISCOUNT – "A Life Amongst The Ruins" LP
If you thought melding folk and punk was a goofy as hell idea, you'll be super stoked to know there's a group of Portland folk punx who are still out there, but this time they're adding black metal-style evil vocal growls. This genre could (and does) do much, much worse than this

offering. Lovers of MISCHIEF BREW, PINE HILL HAINTS, or even GOGOL BORDELLO might lose their minds over this. It's like if that one band of crusties that train-hopped to your local bluegrass festival to play for tips were actually super serious about their weird craft and were kinda good and played real shows and stuff. (DZ)
(1332)

ENDLESS DEMISE / PODRIDO – split EP
ENDLESS DEMISE feature one of the greatest grindcore vocalists of all time in Victor Garcia (ex-EXCRUCIATING TERROR, of course), but their material here doesn't nearly live up to the mark of his earlier work. It's not terrible by any means, it's just completely run-of-the-mill '00s grind with no hooks or memorable parts to speak of. PODRIDO's dual-vocal spew on the flipside at least has a little life to it, featuring the kind of semi-incompetent charm one found in a lot of the early '90s noisecore bands (it's appropriate that Giulio the Bastard is prominent on their thanks list). Still, it's nothing essential. Someone should keep a running list of mediocre grind splits and give the millionth one a gold medal or something. At least then they'd have some purpose. (AU)
(Power It Up)

ENDORPHINS LOST – "Choose Your Way" LP
ENDORPHINS LOST play down-tuned speedy hardcore that often delves into powerviolence territory and immediately brings to mind turn-of-the-millennium CAPITALIST CASUALTIES, along with the first NEUROSIS LP. Plenty of metallic hardcore and occasional grind flair is on display as well, with lots of crunchy or grooving breakdowns, blastbeats, harmonics, and the occasional extended solo or ambient interlude. At least three sets of vocals growl, squawk, yell, and frequently trade off. Although we're long past the point where breaking the speed barrier means anything, that this band stays this heavy and tight all while exhibiting several different degrees of "fast" on this record is absolutely noteworthy. While these fourteen songs don't necessarily listen like a cohesive album, all of the various parts and tempos flow quite well together, and the recording that's big and punchy but with a good amount of scuzz makes sure that nothing gets lost. If you keep up with the Six Weeks roster, definitely hop on this. (DG)
(Six Weeks)

FLEAS – "Heart Breaker" EP
Although the meat of this killer slab is sorta like a more pissed, yet way less political ANIMALS AND MEN with a fucked up sax, the real ripper is the title track. It's pretty fucking great! Simple, three chord, abrasive, unpolished punk. It might just be the singer's accent and her awesome shitty sax solos combined, but this is on repeat. (DZ)
(Grow Your Own)

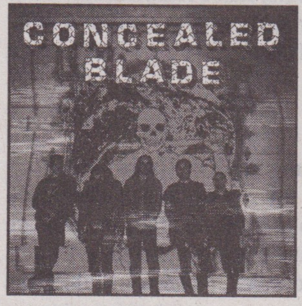
FREE MACHINES / WHISPERING WIRES – split EP
This split 7" features two bands from Tucson, AZ. Both bands have that heavy rock thing trying to pass as garage rock. WHISPERING WIRES's singer has a high-pitched voice that borders on obnoxious, especially when he's trying to hit those high notes. The FREE MACHINES singer has a similar style, but his vocal is more buried in the mix so it lacks the obnoxiousness. Overall, the record is an interesting listen. (CK)
(Wooden Tooth)

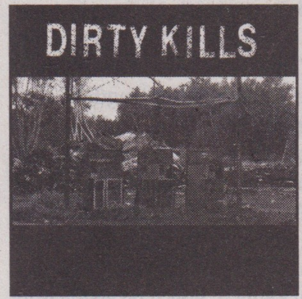
FUCKING INVINCIBLE / LIFESPITE – split EP
No sun shines here. This one's for all you grim crust freaks out there. First up is FUCKING INVINCIBLE, and they are fucking sick! They do that basic heavy hardcore riff, then blastbeat, then grind. Think GODSTOMPER with guitars, or *Scum*-era NAPALM DEATH. When done right this is probably my favorite kind of grind, and these fuckers do it to a T. LIFESPITE has a dark, brooding crust kind of sound, like WARCOLLAPSE, but more sludge. If you like songs with titles like "Blown to Shreds" and "More Death" as much as I do, then get this record! (BA)
(Atomic Action / Bones Brigade)

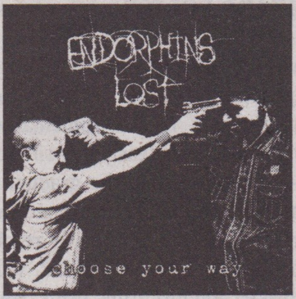
GIRL POWER – "Welcome to the Gun Show" LP
This all-male band plays dark, atmospheric hardcore that's a tad noisy and mostly mid-paced and plodding with some power, but without real direction. The vocalist brings to mind a more angsty Cal, and the production definitely sounds like they played *Hear Nothing See Nothing Say Nothing* for the engineer, but despite some unconventional drumming (at least by hardcore standards), six of the seven songs lack the drive or hooks necessary to pass the memorability test. The closer "Anti" shifts gears and further slows down, driven by a shimmering riff that plays off a stark, sludgy two-note bassline. It's the longest on the record and by far the best of the batch, but it's too little too late. (DG)
(Kibou / Mangel Wax / Mono Canibal / Richter Scale)

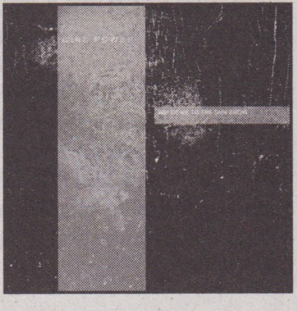
GIVE – "Electric Flower Cult" LP
GIVE is the kind of band you just wanna bathe in. It's hard to write a review when you just wanna lie down and let a record wash over you. It's the same feeling I got when my dad played me *Lifes Rich Pageant* for the first time. In fact, comparisons are always made between GIVE and Revolution Summer bands, but honestly, I feel like they share more in common with R.E.M., especially the string of records starting with *Fables of the Reconstruction* and ending with *Green*, or BOB MOULD's solo stuff, like *Workbook* or *Black Sheets of Rain*. This platter is a great companion to *Electric Flower Circus*; in fact, it, often feels like an expansion on that LP. It seems like a lot of bands are expanding their palettes and moving towards a more textured, melodic, mid '80s sound, but there's something really special about GIVE that puts them way out ahead of the rest. Not only are they interesting, evocative, and moving, but also it doesn't seem forced. I love this band. For fans of: that moment when the sun breaks through the clouds and you finally feel good, dinner with close friends, driving down a long ass highway in the middle of nowhere. (MW)
(Lockin' Out)

GPL – "Anatomy Of A Sailing Ship" CD
This Italian band has been around since 1999. Really? They self-









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describe as skate punk but this isn't what I consider traditional skate punk. This is emo hardcore along the ways of A WILHELM SCREAM, STRUNG OUT, and PROPAGANDHI. Cool riffs and lots of sing-along choruses with thick accented vocals singing in English. Probably hot shit in Italy but pretty common here. Still decent for the genre. (RL)
(Ghost Factory)

GREY HAIRS – "Family Business" CD
Hip swingin' sultry indie / garage with serious teeth. There are tracks like "Sausage" that hint at the mesmerizing energy of heavy / melodic bands like KYLESA and TORCHE; then they drop a lazy bluesy "Red Paint" with tinges of '90s college / alt like AFGHAN WHIGS…and the driving synths in "On And Off"? That's where the "sultry" thing come in. GREY HAIRS are decidedly cooler than most of the shit in this newsprint rag, but truth is truth, and good jams are good jams. Cool or not. (WN)
(Gringo)

HAISTELIJAT – "Pientä Kohoumaa" EP
Fuckin' great Finnish hardcore punk, with an emphasis on the punk. Clean guitars, super-pissed vocals and strong songwriting carry this EP. The label says they've been around since '82, which I'm not sure I entirely believe, but this definitely has an old-school, battle-tested feel to it. The last track ("Tulisit Jo") runs out of steam a bit at the end, but everything else is all go. Whatever their provenance, this is some high-end shit. (AU)
(Joteskii Groteskii / Nuuhkaja)

HAMMER PARTY – "An Evening With the Hammer Party" EP
Hardcore-surf from Huntsville, Texas? I didn't know it existed, but here we are. Not poppy like AGENT ORANGE but maybe a little JFA blended with *Damaged*-era BLACK FLAG with surf guitar flourishes, and that surf drum thing. Musically I think it's pretty interesting and enjoyable, though I don't think the sparse shouting vocal style complements it very well. Still, it's always nice to hear something different and unexpected. (MA)
(4452)

HOT TIP – "Hold Me, Closely" LP
Here's a cool new Buffalo band presenting about twelve tracks of spirited and inventive post-punk / noise rock. Musically this lands somewhere near the realm of late '80s post-No Wave bands out of NYC like BAND OF SUSANS or LIVE SKULL that would refine that pummeling GLENN BRANCA school of guitar playing, but with a different set of grooves and time signatures. There are even some parts that remind me of STILLSUIT, but the song structures here are a little more conventional overall. At other moments this sounds a bit like *New Plastic Ideas*-era UNWOUND. If any of the things above appeal to you I think you might also like this record a lot. (EW)
(Bitch-Face / One Percent Press / Radical Empathy)

HOY PINOY / MPG – split EP
Delicious doses of low-end blasting PV from two long-running under the radar SoCal outfits. HOY PINOY lean more towards the drunken fastcore end of the spectrum, while MPG grind through five creamers, the intensity broken up by hip hop samples, the way this shit is supposed to be presented. (WN)
(self-released)

INDIAN NIGHTMARE – "Taking Back The Land" LP
Alright, let's tackle the elephant in the room. This band's name and album imagery are extremely problematic. It's 100% blackface-level stereotyping of American Indian culture compete with feathered headdresses and tomahawks, and it's really, really not okay. It doesn't really matter where the band members are from or what their intentions were, the tiniest bit of research would have these guys running screaming from everything about the way they approached this record if they had the slightest bit of respect for the cultures they are apparently inspired by. It sucks. It's really cool that these guys from Mexico, Turkey, Indonesia, and Italy managed to get together in Berlin and form a band, but fuck, this is such a bad look. The music is okay metal-punk à la G.A.T.E.S. and such, with some good riffs and leads. The glam-metal vocals are a bit of a turn-off, though they're hardly the biggest problem this record has. I mean...come on. Look at this fucking thing. (AU)
(Kämäset Levyt)

INSOMNIAX – "Amphetademons" CD
I really used to love shooting speed. Judging by the crossed syringe artwork and album title, maybe this guy did too. Actually this is kind of the sound of one man tweaked out in a room for days recording with a shitty drum machine, doing all the music and writing metal songs about battling his personal demons. The sound is pretty crappy and there are some early BATHORY and SODOM moments but for the most part this is poop. He pays respect to Lemmy and Philthy but they're dead and can't save him here. Get out of your bedroom, meet some friends that can pick up an instrument, and get out there and do some real damage. (RO)
(Mystery School)

THE JERKS / STANDARD UNION – "Bombs Over Home" EP
Nothing says "Eeeesh..." like a split 7" released in honor of last year's Record Store Day. Must've been on the slow boat over to *MRR*. Anyway, "Bombs Over Home" collects (ahem) "vintage" early 2000s recordings from two Aussie bands, both cookie-cutter street-centric outfits extolling the virtues of working class hooliganism. STANDARD UNION's adherence to absolute RANCID worship borders on comical, whereas the JERKS waltz through forgettable and tame modern streetpunk dross. Both bands cover each other, not that you'd notice or care much. Thumbs way down, doggies. (MC)
(Dirtyflair)

JULIETTE SEIZURE & THE TREMOR DOLLS – "Chewing Out Your Rhythm On My Bubblegum" LP

Wow. This is pretty okay. Like it's pretty damn great. Fuck me, this is killer. Don't let the "bubblegum" thing scare you—there is nothing bubblegummy about this record. This is female-fronted trashy punk rock that is delivered with a sense of urgency that will separate it from the rest of the pack. All that and it also manages to remain super catchy. Seriously, the ability to be trashy, but tight and nervy, but catchy? That's special. I live for this sort of stuff. (KK)
(Dirtyflair)

LAST DAYS – "Torn in Two Parts" EP

Mid-tempo melodic punk from Finland. Three songs in English and one in what appears to be Swedish. The four songs are similar with single note guitar parts and vocals that fall somewhere between singing and yelling with introspective lyrics. Possibly for fans of LA FRACTION or NO MORE ART. (JC)
(Blame the Victim)

LAST WARNING – "Confusion" EP

LAST WARNING offer up some solid, straightforward hardcore, along the lines of DYS or LAST RIGHTS. There's something kind of refreshing about how bands continually try and replicate the hardcore records that, I assume, changed their lives. It's a very fine line to walk, because it can come across as contrived if you don't have the attitude to match the riffs. That's what makes hardcore special though, right? You don't have to be talented or experienced, you can just do it, and if you got it, the attitude spills over onto the recording. LAST WARNING aren't reinventing anything, but they seem fierce and determined. I'm into this record. Shoutout to the fake poster on the other side of the lyric insert, photoshopping their band onto a LIFE'S BLOOD CBGB matinee show. (MW)
(Take It Back)

LAZY CLASS – "The First 3 Years" CD

This 18-track CD collects this Polish Oi! / streetpunk band's discography since 2014, including their compilation and split tracks as well as songs from their own 7" and 10" EPs. My research shows that some of the primaries in this band have played around in Warsaw to varying degrees of success in different hardcore bands as well as glam / '77-style groups. LAZY CLASS represents their return to a style that they originally worked on as teens, and I guess there's a kind of grown-up attention to detail in the songwriting—it's intricate but not too belabored (i.e. not too flashy, *no ska parts*). Some tracks like "Voice of Oi!" even have some organ down in the mix. Most of this is in English, but there are a couple of songs in Polish on this CD and they're my favorites by far. Maybe I need the lyrics sung in a different language to enjoy this revenant brand of streetpunk, or maybe this disc is a little too glossy and earnest for the duplicitous and deceitful times we live in. (EW)
(Oldschool)

LIZARD POLICE – "Get Wrecked" LP

The scream of *"So you think you're happy now!?"* smacks you in the face right before the A-side ends. This is a fully cohesive Mid-American pop punk album that controls you the entire length of your listen. From the instrumental opening track, to the gradual build to the energy-releasing A-side closer, to the continued blasts on the B-side opener, and the gradual cool down to the instrumental at the end, you become a marionette of LIZARD POLICE. The hallelujah preacher vocals, frequently reminiscent of Mike Ski from the AKAS and BROTHER'S KEEPER, will make you reach for your baptismal whiskey and just drink, drink. Before you know it, you'll be awkwardly sideways headbanging and doing some thrashing and jumping and screaming and the like and the such. Oh yes, you will. (RH)
(Little Mafia)

LOSST – "5 Track Demo" EP

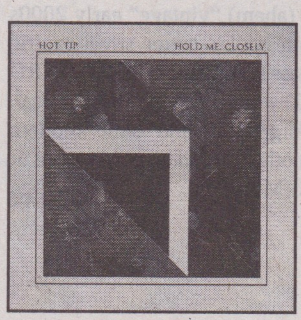
Sometimes demo tapes deserve to be regurgitated on wax…and sometimes they fukkn demand it. The debut release from this Malaysian outfit stands proudly in the latter category, with five bursts of tough as nails floor burners. A constant driving one-two, one-two surges every track forward with low-end booming through the mix while gruff vocals lead the charge. And also: riffs for fukkn days. The vocals are gonna get LOSST lumped in with the Oi! fetishists which falls right in line with their straightforward intensity, though this actually hits me like a fist full of 1983 Midwest hardcore. No pretense, just power, and the back of the record pretty much sums it up: *"No Leather, No Gloves, No Shit, Only Face Stomping Hardcore!!!"* (WN)
(Glord)

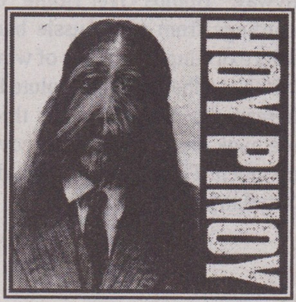
LOST SYSTEM – "No Meaning No Culture" EP

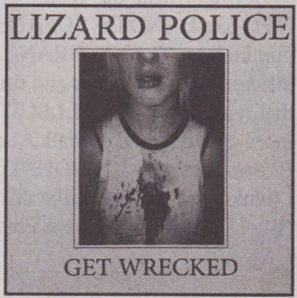
Downer keyboard rock from Grand Rapids, Michigan. The four songs here all revolve around the keyboard and a theme of hopeless lack of emotion. If I had to guess, these guys probably listen to a lot of the FALL, SPITS, and DEVO. These tracks don't quite come close to rivaling those, though they do make for a nice slab of wax. Michigan knows how to party depressed! (JC)
(Neck Chop)

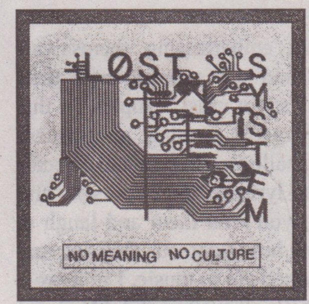
MAC BLACKOUT BAND – "Burning Alive" LP

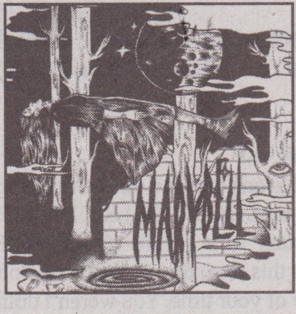
MAC BLACKOUT is the dude from Chicago's FUNCTIONAL BLACKOUTS and this is his band's second album—I like it better than the first. If you're into really theatrical punk, like if you took the *Breaking Glass* and *Times Square* soundtracks and cut them with a heavier version of the ADVERTS, you'll lose your bowels over this. Much of it sounds like "Safety In Numbers" with big ass amps. I like the heavier songs like "Spiral Staircase," which I really want to be about the Manson Family's old crash pad. In fact I wish this band would just go all out with a double concept album and tour with dancers and mimes and crap. MAC could do the sets with his amazing artwork complete with laser eyes and puppies and we'd all cheer and cry, but for now this is what we got. Not so bad. (RO)
(Heavy Dose)











THE MAGNIFIERS – "For The People" CD

I'll just go ahead and tell you the hype first: the MAGNIFIERS are a band of four siblings from Chicago, whose ages range from ten to seventeen. Yes, the drummer is fucking ten years old. The bad news is that it's fairly generic pop punk. They are pretty damn tight for what they do, though. I've been forced to listen to grown ups who have been playing twice as long as some of the members of this band have been sucking in the shitty earthen air, but to be honest, this CD hasn't taken me past the "Whoa, these kids are super young!" mark. It's obvious that there's more modern GREEN DAY worship than, say, Warped Tour garbage, thank Jeebus. There's a song called "Anarchy Sucks" that I had to listen to at least five times, because, even though I have a double black belt in sarcasm and snark, I couldn't figure out what they were trying to say, and it seemed kinda fucked up. Do they really think we should *"just put up with it, until we reach a better time"* or is this kid really already capable of being that bitter, jaded, and toyingly dark in such times, and with such bubblegum pop hooks? Who knows? (DZ)
(self-released)

MARY BELL – LP

This is for the teenage goth girls at the mall—not the sad ones, but the mean obnoxious ones. This is a power pop version of BABES IN TOYLAND or L7 with a nu-goth edge. Or the meeting of JACK OFF JILL and the DISTILLERS. Putting a lot of effort into being "badass" here. (MM)
(Collectif Semi-Conscient / Danger / Le Turc Mecanique)

MEATBODIES – "Alice" LP

The second LP from this LA psych / pop / garage trio is purportedly a concept record, but I'll wait for the VOD musical version (starring Jason Lee, Jared Leto, and a member of the original OH SEES lineup) to drop before I try and follow the plot. The music here isn't very punk for the most part but one of the singers often goes for a pretty solid MARC BOLAN impression. A lot of the songs are able to bend and zig-zag between head-banging hard rock à la SABBATH or PENTAGRAM and deftly arranged SPARKS-y parts. There are a couple high points including one very weird track tucked away at the end of the A-side that sounds like the Damon Edge lineup of CHROME trying to do work a PRETTY THINGS song into their repertoire or something. If you're considering moving to Los Angeles or prepared to pay $15 or more for a rock show you might find even more to enjoy here. (EW)
(In the Red)

MIDNIGHT MINES – "If You Can't Find A Partner Use A Wooden Chair" LP

Lemmy Caution of BLACK TIME infamy languidly bashes brains in with his debut solo offering, stylishly terrorizing under the guise of MIDNIGHT MINES. As one of the century's premier racket surgeons, Caution's unique vision is one I've craved in these unnerving times of seismic panic, so I'm thankful for the trembling this LP causes in me. MIDNIGHT MINES manages to pay homage to the dark mod thump and fuzz wallop of BLACK TIME's most effective offerings, but there are moments where the assault is patient and almost doubly effective. One can't ignore "Accattone," the album's focal point and most stretched-out number, pureeing the ideals of the NORMAL, "Sister Ray" and heavy Kraut rumble into glorious punky noise. The makeup of the surrounding material is varied and winning as well, recalling other UK brainiacs like the REBEL (though the most song-focused incarnations thereof) and only the most industrial aspects of the FALL. Criminal Rock'n'Roll, and criminally limited to boot. Highly recommended. (MC)
(Mystery Plane)

MIDNITE SNAXXX – "Chew on This" LP

After the last absolute killer of a 45, which sounded like a devastating lost *KBD* essential, I was left waiting for this long player with bated breath. I can finally let my breath out—the SNAXX mob have combined the *Bloodstains Across Oakland* mania of the 45 with their power pop roots in a most desirable manner! This makes me want to drop out of school even though I don't go anymore. If you are the type to listen to tough girl swagger "Brickfield Nights" on repeat, dress like a Ramone or NIKKI CORVETTE and now need an instruction manual on how to dance, steal a car, and drive off into the night looking for kicks and total freedom from capitalism and the patriarchy the MIDNITE SNAXXX have you covered. It's hard to pick a top track but "Quit Being a Dick" is enough to make you wanna burn the City Rock Discoteq to the ground. (LG)
(Pelican Pow Wow)

MODERN CONVENIENCE – "Wild and Reckless" LP

This is a party record, recorded for parties, by a party band. MODERN CONVENIENCE play pretty minimalist garage, with lots of simple single string melodies tying together the blazing power chords. But they draw from several instantly recognizable wells, like the distinctly DEAD KENNEDYS-esque riff on "No Time," or the several tracks that venture into GIORGIO MURDERER and AUSMUTEANTS synth-punk territory. Sometimes it sounds a little rough in some of the fills, but that's just what kind of party this is. Keep this record close to your UNDERGROUND RAILROAD TO CANDYLAND and DIARRHEA PLANET discs and don't be too mad when someone sets their pizza slice down on it. (LP)
(Heavy Dose)

MOD HIPPIE – "Big Wow" CD

This is novelty rock. It is a kitschy amalgam of country western and circus music. For their second album MOD HIPPIE have added DJ BONEBRAKE of X and BEACH BOY David Marks. They are really trying to capitalize on that fact by making it seem like these two celebs are the heart of the band. I know you need a hook to get people to listen to your band, but this is a pretty lame thing to do. (CK)
(Karma Frog)

MR. WAX – "Wax City" EP

This is like listening to LONGMONT POTION CASTLE and MR. BUNGLE at the same time. The WEIRD AL of Lumpy Records? (LG)
(Lumpy)

MUFF DIVERS – "No Muff Too Tuff" EP

I'm not a big fan of pop punk, but this one gets me off the floor long enough to do a one-legged pogo attempt. TOY DOLLS / DICKIES / CLOROX GIRLS wimpy voiced punk with a balls out JOHNNY THUNDERS guitar player that rescues this from throwaway weakdom. This is a really good record and worthy of your time. You weren't doing anything anyway. Fuck you. (RO)
(Lumpy)

THE MUSCATS – "Muscat Radio" EP

This is one of those truly baffling Record Store Day releases, a reissued 2004 demo from a teenage garage punk band from Adelaide. I'd never heard of this band before and my elementary attempts at research reveal absolutely nothing that I couldn't already glean from these six tracks of ramshackle garage punk. It's hard to tell the difference between the kick drum and the pops in the master tape, if that gives you an idea of the recording quality. Each song has that kind of teenage exuberance and impatience where the drums accidentally end up in swing time. That's not to say it's inept: you get the feeling that this band sounds *exactly* what they want to sound like when in the middle of a song called "We Need Anarchy" (the hook: *"an-an-an-anarchy / it's what we want, it's what we need"*) they break into a two bar cover of "Anarchy in the UK." Limited to 100 copies. (EW)
(Dirtyflair)

NIP DRIVERS – "Fox on the Run / E.Y.O.B"

I love *Desperate Teenage Lovedolls*, a great movie with lots of eternally quotable one-liners and a cast to die for. This SWEET cover features prominently on the soundtrack, and if you had to own a NIP DRIVERS record this is a short and sweet burner that will take care of any hardcore BroCal impulses you have. "E.Y.O.B" (or Eat Yourself Out, Baby" on the B-side with Janus's tough girl vocals makes a good trash-based chaser. (LG)
(Slope)

NOSFERATU – "Sounds of Hardcore" EP

NOSFERATU, from Austin, play hyperspeed hardcore that never lets up—by my count, there's only one moment where they stop long enough for the guitarist to rip out a solo. KORO is the obvious comparison here. Most of these songs are a blur, over before this listener could sink her teeth in, and I was left wondering what KORO would sound like had they not sped up their recording—what hooks are lost when you actually write at this speed? NOSFERATU are no NEOS, sadly, but "Flag and Cross" could be a lost track from *Killed by Hardcore*. A very worthwhile release nonetheless, and the hardcore yin to the rest of the Lumpy stable's new wave yang. (SW)
(Lumpy)

OI POLLOI – "Saorsa" LP

While most geezer bands carry on embarrassing themselves, OI POLLOI manages to charge ahead and stay relevant with their special brand of "progressive Oi!" and "street crust." Topics on this album include (but are not limited to) organic farming, government surveillance, saving the bees, destroying phallocentricity, metal detector rights, and of course, bashing the fash. The lyrics to "Soil Yourself" and "Our Winged Sisters" are genius. Like, you read them and laugh at how silly they sound, while still admitting how righteous they are, and then they're super catchy and effective when put to music. I'm more a fan of the "prog Oi!" tracks on here, but it's all pretty solid. "No" and "Yes" appear to be DISCHARGE songs with one-word lyrics. While I don't follow OI POLLOI too closely these days, they were certainly influential to me in my formative punk years (the first anti-homophobia song I heard as a youth was "When Two Men Kiss"), and I am totally back on board with this album; i.e. *"kicking down their door with [my] vegan boots."* (MA)
(Ruin Nation)

PIERRE & BASTIEN – "Musique Grecque" LP

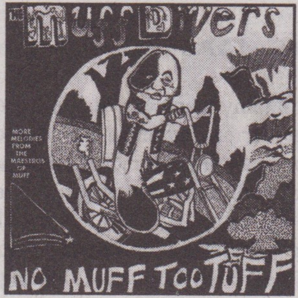
Here's a fantastic album of darkly minimal guitar pop by this most French of duos. Facile guitar figures, doused in reverb, skirt closely around propulsive rhythms. The French vocals are sparse and evoke feelings of ennui. Fans of WIRE, Colin Newman's solo material, FRUSTRATION, or minimal post-punk in general should find much to like. This is their third LP, so now I have some searching to do. (AM)
(SDZ)

POISON RITES – LP

After a pretty decent demo, Denver's POISON RITES return with a full-length of HELLACOPTERS and SONIC RENDEZVOUS BAND-inspired muscle car rock'n'roll. The singer sounds a lot like the immortal FRED "SONIC" SMITH which sure ain't a bad thing especially on songs like "City Abuse" (which sounds a lot like "City Slang"). The sound is shitty like cheap crank and the screened cover shows they aren't some slick metal jerkoffs. They even cover a KIDS song, which is kinda limp and punk as fuck at the same time. Yeah, it's good…this stuff burrrns. (RO)
(Splattered!)

THE PROLETARIAT – "Soma Holiday" LP

For all of those readers who still think that the reviewers here are snobby-ass know-it-alls, I just want you to know that this is the first time I'm ever hearing this "classic" record...and it fucking rules! Originally released in 1983, this southeastern Massachusetts band busted out tight and angular punk in the vein of GANG OF FOUR and WIRE with the urgency of hardcore. The lyrics are smart and incisive, perfectly conveying the dread and paranoia of a nation under Reagan, sadly all still too relevant in our current fascist reality. If this isn't already sitting on your shelf, I can't recommend this reissue enough. The remastering job by John Golden makes the music practically jump off the vinyl. Pure perfection. (GH)
(S-S)



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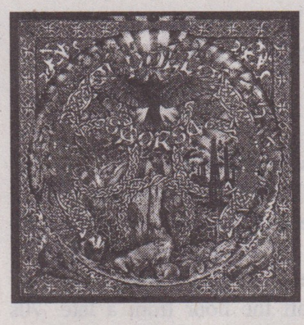
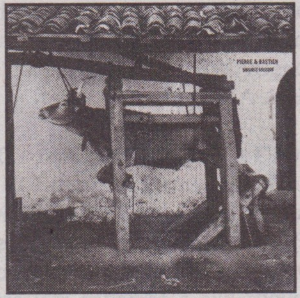
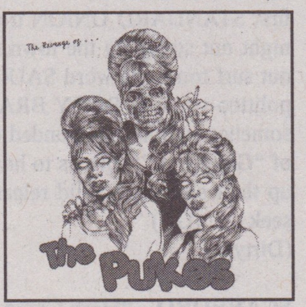






PSYCHIC WHEELS – "Deny It / Outside Your Door"

Droney psyche from Columbus Ohio, has a VU "What Goes On" vibration, it's the keys making that feeling happen…PSYCHIC WHEELS have got a more tranquil sunshine feeling than that paranoid NYC end times pop genius. There's nothing particularly catchy or mind-blowing here, but good natured driving tunes for a windy rainy shut in day. How can a band be droney and have bubblegum appeal at the same time?! Listen to these creatures and find out… (LG)
(Superdreamer)

THE PUKES – "The Revenge of the Pukes" LP

Some garage rock moderne from Milwaukee, WI. The PUKES sounds an awful lot like BBQ. Surfy rock tunes with doo-wop-y crooner vocals. The band is comprised of three guys even though the cover makes it look it will be three women. What's up with that? (CK)
(Good Land / Tire Fire)

QUESTION – LP

A fukkn perfect juggernaut of lightspeed hardcore punk. Scandi-riffs masked by blinding speed and a beat so manic that it's hard to even find the D, if you know what I mean. Their idea of slowing down ("A New You") is a devastating mid-paced bulldozer drenched in manic early Minneapolis guitars, and it just makes "Self Sacrifice" seem even more intense when it drops. Saira's vocals are as forceful as they have ever been, and the words on this record are every bit as crucial as the sounds. This record is a clinic in ripping hardcore, and all I want is more. *"Free yourself from knowing all / in time you'll find PEACE of mind."* (WN)
(Fashionable Idiots)

RAIN LIKE THE SOUND OF TRAINS – LP

At some point in the early '90s, a whole gang of folks that were a part of DC's Revolution Summer started to experiment with mixing the punk that they were previously playing and different styles of music. Some of it worked, some of it didn't. If it did or not is often just a matter of opinion. Some people, like myself, think that FUGAZI's *Red Medicine* album is amazing. Others think that it is where they started to go wrong. RAIN LIKE THE SOUND OF TRAINS was one of those bands. They included members of a number of Revolution Summer bands and at least one hardcore band. They played hardcore in the Dischord style but with a funk element and if that doesn't sound very appealing, you might be right. This LP is a collection of their three 7"s. The A-side of the first 7" has this plucky bass line that almost sounds like parody, like someone is making fun of the *Seinfeld* intro (Harsh? Maybe!), while the B-side is very catchy slow jam. On the second 7", the A-side is a very catchy, slightly poppy punk song with amazing drumming and lyrics worthy of a lyrics sheet. The B-side is kind of a bummer version of "Washington Bullets." The second side of this record has the last 7". Again, it has a lot of the same thing going on but done much better. Two songs, "Under the Eye" and "Picked," are great. A more pop version of what you would expect from Dischord at the time. It has great musicianship, well-written songs, and great lyrics. The other two songs, well, you know by now. If you are a fan of that era of DC emo / hardcore, like SOUL SIDE or are just interested, then this is totally worth it. While the whole of it may not be amazing, there are some great songs that have a smart, political slant. (PA)
(Atomic Action)

RETRASERES – "Grandes Éxitos Vol. III" LP

After studying the fart cloud / bulging eyeball / snot rocket cartoon cover art I expected some sort of inept shit-punk. On the contrary, here we are treated to fourteen fun and frantic punkers from this Valencia trio. It's got the jangle and punch of the MINUTEMEN, the snotty flavor of Spanish punk, and great singalong choruses. Sometimes jittery, sometimes swingy, always a success. Bravo! Put 'em on your "new bands to check out" list, cuz you have one. (MA)
(Hover Craft)

ROMANTIČNE BOJE – LP

As the story goes, this record was written and recorded in the former Yugoslavia 30 years ago, but never released until now. Utilizing warm synth tones and a stark drum machine, they present nine songs of dark goth and shaky post-punk, but it sounds like new wave to me...or one of those dance nights filled with people who look like chaos punks. The vocals are sung in a dark, even, dramatic tone that lends itself more to goth than punk. It has a low budget and stark charm that pulls me in. Definitely a weird unearthed relic. (GH)
(Doomed to Extinction)

THE SABALA BACALA – "Urodzeni W Prlu" CD

This Polish pop punk band sails the seas on a boat that resembles the SS Fat Wreck Chords and probably has a little more bite than something being sold in a 2004-era Hot Topic, but not much more. You know what I'm saying? They throw it some ska-tinged flavor and a RAMONES cover ("KKK Took My Baby Away") to mix things up. Not good or bad, just middle of the road. (GH)
(self-released)

SANCTION THIS – "Erase Us" EP

In the spirit of UK82 and late '70s anarcho-punk, comes a bass-driven, dirgey throwback from Newcastle-Upon-Tyne. The three-track EP starts with "Erase Us," an oration from the pulpit with loads of feedback and groove channeling KILLING JOKE and ZYGOTE. "Media Trap" is straightforward hardcore with derivative breakdowns in the style of RIOT / CLONE. Closer "Sanctify Genocide" is my favorite track with dismal bass lines similar to STONE THE CROWS, EXIT-STANCE, and DIRGE. The heavy double bass pedal on the outro would have been powerful to hear a few other times over the course of the record. A lot of hollering of the song titles in each song, but an impassioned recording from musicians who I sense are some veteran UK punks. (JR)
(Grow Your Own)

THE SAUCER-MEN / STANDARD UNION – split EP

Here's a tasty lil' four-song split EP from two Australian bands. The

first STANDARD UNION track is crushing anthemic Oi! great for a night out stomping the town. SAUCER-MEN have all the reverbed-out surf tones the word SAUCER implies, an odd combo with folksy politico-vox à la BILLY BRAGG or NEWTOWN NEUROTICS that somehow works, all rounded out nicely with a SPECIAL AKA cover of "Gangsters." Curious to hear what else STANDARD UNION have up their sleeves, a solid release I wouldn't have otherwise known to seek out. (GB)
(Dirtyflair)

SCARBORO – "Here Come The Hangover" CD
This young Brooklyn hardcore band gives us a well-played full-length that starts off with some OPPRESSED LOGIC style hardness before veering right into the slick popcore of BAD RELIGION / RANCID / DESCENDENTS. Totally, totally not my thing but done with respect for the genre and tight musicianship. I've been meditating a lot and eating brown rice and shit and I think it shows. A record that will make you regular. (RO)
(WTF)

S.L.I.P. – "Slippy When Wet" LP
3-2-1 win. This follow-up to last year's single both expands and improves on their earlier tracks. Almost anyone can go buy a clear guitar and bust out some Ginn scales and soloing, but S.L.I.P.'s channeling of post-*My War* BLACK FLAG, along with some Morris-era partial riff borrowing, shows a clear understanding of exactly how this stuff works, and also interweaves it with other general early '80s LA punk riffing, along with the ZERO BOYS or something. The vocal delivery is snotty, earnest, deadpan and yes, wound up all at once, and the guitar feedback is definitely recognizable from the first few PISSED JEANS records (I wouldn't be surprised if at least part of the same gear setup was used). A lot of the songs sound pieced together, but it works. I usually don't want to hear shit about modern signifiers (YouTube, "posting pictures") or self-referential lyrics about "the scene" in punk songs in any context whatsoever, but I'll let it slide, as S.L.I.P. does offer up some non-cliché commentary on the bullshit state of the micro and macro worlds that we as punks inhabit. Not bad at all for a band that made the jump straight from single to LP. (DG)
(Sorry State)

SM-70 – LP & EP
I wish I had more historical context to contribute, but this creamer is more than worth your undivided attention regardless of era (late '80s into early '90s) or context (German fukkn punk). Insanely fast blasts of hardcore that fall into a weird Deutschpunk groove when they (rarely) slow things down. Don't focus on the slow part though, 90% of this collection is so fast it makes your head spin. Tracks culled from late '80s EP releases, a split with SATANIC MALFUNCTIONS and really raw and utterly crippling live tracks, occasionally descending into pure noise / grind before dropping another blast of catchy punk. This shit is unreal, and there's a bonus EP with eight tracks just to drive it all home. Just when I felt like there are too many reissues clouding the skies and taking attention away from worthy new bands, something like this falls in my lap. Don't snooze on this...my want list just got a few records longer. (WN)
(Hate Ape Productions)

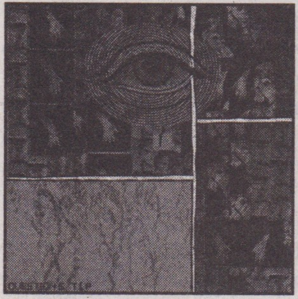
SOFT CHEEK – "Not Just a Demonstration" EP
This is some guys from RIK & THE PIGS and it sounds like an outtake from a lost 1979 LOST KIDS record or a more straightforward SWELL MAPS. Everything is slightly off-kilter like a broken tilt-a-whirl tapping in time with an out-of-tune carnival organ. This truly sounds like a forgotten reel scraped off the floor from a late '70s Copenhagen punk house...and it's really good too! (GH)
(Lumpy)

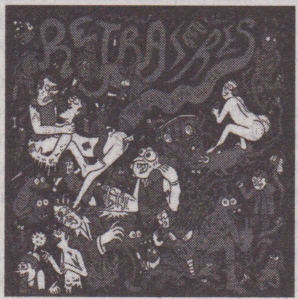
SOTATILA – "Diskografia 2005-2012" CD
On this CD discography we get three seven inches, a demo and a bunch of compilation tracks from these D-beat worshiping, Finnish chaos crusties. I feel like I only needed one seven inch to get the idea with these guys. They do some generic Scandinavian hardcore, but they do it well enough. Does it get my blood going? Not really, but it would be fine background music for some hardcore streetpunk social event. So, if you are rocking a DISORDER back patch, and love skulls wearing army helmets, then maybe this one's for you. (BA)
(Kämäset Levyt)

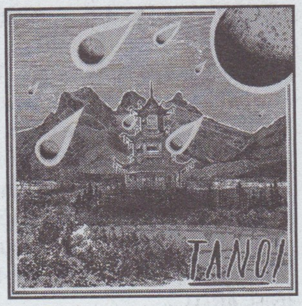
STANDARD UNION – "Sing, Drink, and Dance" LP
Man, what a horrible album cover! It's one of those old timey microphones as a head on a woman's body with beer bottles for tits done all hot pink and teal. New wave yack! This band is from South Australia and does a sorta STIFF LITTLE FINGERS / BRIEFS thing mixed with one of Duane Peters's more countrified bands. If Duane had a desk job and did a little coke on the weekends you might get some crap like this. They ruin a LOUVIN BROTHERS song as well as three (?!) other covers. Song-writing and art aren't their strong points. They probably have lovely personalities, like a band Tinder date. (RO)
(Dirtyflair)

S-21 – "Year Zero" EP
S-21 lays out four tracks of heavy, stompy mid-paced hardcore. "Brass Gavel" kicks off with a resolute grunt, and the drums and bass are pogo-ready, with burly riffs and some Japan-via-Austin-inspired guitar solos tastefully sprinkled into the mix. The rest of the record dispenses with some of the bounce, but more than makes up for it in power and rage. The lyrics are great, touching on resistance to state-sanctioned white supremacist violence, the Cambodian Genocide, and abuse of power. An excellent debut. (SW)
(Slugsalt / World Gone Mad)

THE SYSTEM – "Live" LP
A studio-like live recording from 2014 by this classic UK anarcho-punk band. "Let's Be Free," "S.A.S.," "Their Decisions," "Dogs of War"…all the hits are here, most importantly everything from their







two Spiderleg EPs. I have to say, it sounds really great! Everything is loud, clear, well-executed, and feels lively and not fogey-ish. Fourteen tracks. If you need a live record by the SYSTEM in 2017, this should suffice. (MA)
(Global Resistance / Grow Your Own)

THE SYSTEM – "Slave To The Machine" LP

One of the keys to tolerating existence is the ability to manage expectations. So it's 2017, and here's a new studio LP from UK legends the SYSTEM...you see where I'm going with this, right? My initial blast of *Slave To The Machine* was in the *MRR* kitchen during a long overdue shit shooting session with Grace the other night, and we both agreed that it was a solid punk jammer...solid enough that I was looking forward to diving in deeper, which I am now. The wall of guitars is awesome (indeed, the entire recording is just massive), but doesn't really fit with what you're expecting from the SYSTEM, so it takes a little getting used to, but hiding behind those guitars are the same off-kilter drums that helped make their early '80s recordings so distinct and every chorus makes you want to clench a fist, just like they are supposed to. I confess that there's more metal here than I would like, but settling into the second side, I start to not even mind the over the top leads in "Every Day." The base is classic UK anarcho-punk, it's just supercharged. (WN)
(Grow Your Own)

TANO! – 12"

This Catalan two-piece really runs the gamut of emo styles here. The record leads off with a very modern and technical style, not unlike the emo that wormed its way into heavier grind bands like CLOUD RAT or RAPE REVENGE, but ends with a very European sounding anthem. In between, there're a shit load of instrumentals, tons of mathy riffing, and a few head-scratching moments, like the one reggae breakdown, complete with mad tape delay. If you like those BATON ROUGE records but hate the French, this is way wackier but a good next step. (LP)
(La Agonia de Vivir / Krims Kramz / Saltamarges)

THE THINGZ – "Vault Of Tomorrow" LP

The THINGZ hail from Southern California, and peddle a thick-necked strain of garage rock'n'roll with a case of the CRAMPS (if you substitute the sleaze for themes of sci-fi and horror). As clichéd as that may sound on paper, the THINGZ have a lot of personality, and really sound like they're having fun on these tracks. Good stuff. (AM)
(Coffee Addict)

PAT TODD & THE RANKOUTSIDERS – "The Outskirts of Your Heart" 2xLP

For a considerable swath of the late 20th century, Todd and his LAZY COWGIRLS were a guiding light for bona-fide rock'n'roll enthusiasts the world over, blazing bright with an unmistakable blend of gut-punch guitar punk and ragged, rootsy tearjerkers. The early 2000s brought dissolution of the COWGIRLS and formation of the RANKOUTSIDERS, a shift that presumably freed Todd of expectations. With *The Outskirts of Your Heart*, the RANKOUTSIDERS 2006 debut, all his powers, charms and talents are on full display, as much here as on any of his more celebrated recordings. In truth, the players may have changed, but the core sound remains: Todd's ace vocals, his classic songwriting and EARLE MANKEY's clean, focused production, a holdover from the later COWGIRLS records and a seemingly inextricable component of Todd's overall operation. The collection, a massive 28 song stockpile amassed as during the COWGIRLS's deterioration, is very much in line with his second stint on Sympathy, with equal focus on barroom guitar-sear punk and the playful, true roots-focused rock'n'roll he excels at. While I'll certainly concede that this is simply too much for the beginner or casual fan, devotees will be mighty pleased to have this on the shelf. (MC)
(Hound Gawd!)

URANIUM CLUB – "All Of Them Naturals" 12"

Who'd've guessed such smarmy arty shit would come out of Minneapolis? I suspect some Walker involvement. As a supremely old collector, I find it necessary to toss out comparisons, and I hear two distinct strands here: '80s Midwestern synth punk à la LAST FOUR (4) DIGITS or DOW JONES AND THE INDUSTRIALS or TONE SET, and the frantic immediacy of precious British pop shit like ELASTICA or the FALL. Or maybe they just like DEVO. Pretty killer either way, bet their live show is intense. Most bands are lucky if they can pull off one good song like this. (GB)
(Fashionable Idiots)

UV-TV – "Glass" LP

Florida's UV-TV is many bands at once. Sometimes you get infectious, up-tempo pop punk, kinda CONSTANT INSULT meets GO SAILOR with some BIG EYES thrown in. Sometimes they have dueling masculine / feminine vocals that really didn't work for me, like if a BEASTIE BOY had burst in as they were recording and the band agreed to let him have some airtime. And sometimes they slow it waaay down to stoner shoegaze—think VELOCITY GIRL meets BEST COAST or the great WEED HOUNDS. Apparently this was recorded in an abandoned train station which is a little too Coachella for me, but I do think a lot of people would enjoy getting high and listening to this in the desert (AB).
(Deranged)

VAUDEVILEINS – "Magician" CD

This Chicago band didn't do much for me. They are very '90s alternative rock without enough quirks or downer tunes to hold my attention. I'm thinking TOADIES, BETTER THAN EZRA, and LIVE. Could have been another one-hit-wonder back then but this sound doesn't hold up 20 years later. (RL)
(self-released)

VICIOUS CIRCLE – "Rhyme With Reason / Into The Void" 2xLP

Once upon a time, VICIOUS CIRCLE were the leading lights of Australian hardcore punk. The split LP with PERDITION, the *Circle of the Doomed* EP and the debut LP are all classics of the time that every punk should hear at some point. These two LPs on the other hand... not great. Low-energy, kinda lame sort-of hardcore à la the later 7 SECONDS and TOXIC REASONS material. I can think of a fuckload of better records to give the quality reissue treatment to, that's for sure. The records sound great and there's a nice booklet, so there's that at least. (AU)
(Power It Up)

VIVISEKTIO – "Ydintalvi" EP

Angry thrashing Finnish hardcore anyone? Since submitting one of the catchiest tracks to the *Sound the Alarms* compilation, Finland's VIVISEKTIO have cranked out five new tracks: four pummeling and one mid-tempo. All winners! This EP has an added vocalist, and the dual vocal attack reminds me of country-mates JUGGLING JUGULARS (in their more hardcore moments). That means it's fucking great! It's over in a flash and there really isn't a dull moment on the whole EP. (MA)
(Black Wednesday / Bucho Discos / DIY Koło / Höhnie / Kämäset Levyt / Papagájův Hlasatel / Roku / Vietkong Tapes)

V-SECT – "Nature's Casket" 10"

Two tapes pressed onto one ten-inch record. Their demo on the first side is gloomy hardcore that draws from black and death metal (more the former) in terms of riffing, drumming, ambience, and occasional cacophonic screams, though the second song on the first side is a bit more of a stomper. If the first side listens like running through a dark, icy forest, the second side has the listener running into an inescapable fiery cave. The Chris Corry-recorded *Nature's Only Promise is Death* tape is similar but better, and increases the death metal ratio a bit, riding more on aggressive hardcore and excellent slow-burning hooks. Limited to 300 and worth picking up. (DG)
(Atomic Action)

THE WAD – "Benny's Business" EP

Antagonistic and compulsively punishing, it's the freakin' WAD again with another 7" on Lumpy. This St. Louis synth-punk project remind me of the UNITS on this record's title track more than anything else, but the canvas is bare enough for them to paint their own picture. The first track's built out a sparse set of elements, some mixture of analog oscillators, two or three sampled guitar lines, pots and pans percussion, and the "ch-ching!" noise of a cartoon cash register. If the lyrics leave me wanting a little more (*"if he wants to shove his dick / in a pile of microchips / that's Benny's business"*) I also recognize that it's far from my place to impinge on the pure imagination of the kind of creative process that can put something like this song together. On the B-side "I'm So Terminal" continues to deliver, throwing a glockenspiel into the mix—BRANDO'S ISLAND fans, take note. The last track is an instrumental and doesn't feel as compelling as the first couple songs without the kind of histrionic glue that the vocals provide, but maybe it's appropriate that this record leaves you feeling exhausted after maybe four or five minutes; well done. (EW)
(Lumpy)

WARM BODIES – "Domo" EP

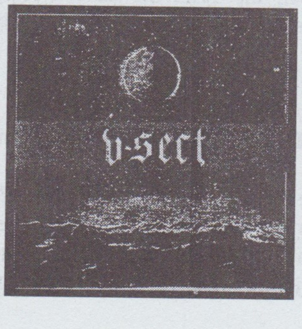
Originally released on cassette last year, this 45 is an unruly collection of creeping crawlitude that will make you unravel. The guitar sound is a wound up paranoid frenzy, somehow like listening to someone try and play true American Hardcore wrath GREG GINN style and also RUDIMENTARY PENI and some weird Midwestern stew, which is to say it's got that All-American deconstruction panic attack reality all over. The singer is a wild art genius, her vocals are surreal screaming incantations about love / control / lost facial features and so forth. The record sounds insane, like if it was recorded well it would be a classic reproduction style American Hardcore record, but instead it's an insane lo-fi desolation zone. (LG)
(Neck Chop)

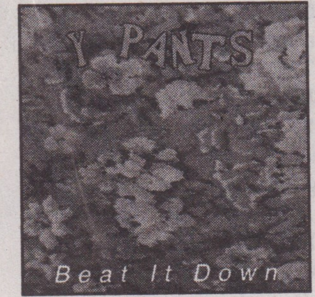
HARTLEY C. WHITE – "This is Not What You Expect" LP

I believe this is a compilation of a selection of cassettes and CD-Rs put out between '91–'09. A deconstructed radical avant garde music, it's got a cut up feeling, sliced up sounds using guitars and keyboards in the most extreme manner, disconcerting music underlying the radical nature of White's lyrics. In places this is sort of like walking past a subway musician who veers to the sentimental, total keyboard schmaltz, but then he decides to use the instrument as rhythm bashing out something intelligible and wild. You can hear a GIL SCOTT HERON influence in some of the lyrics, but the music is so other planetary and not schooled that I wouldn't align HARTLEY C. WHITE with anyone other than himself. (LG)
(OSR)

WORLD WAR IX – "Room for Improvement" EP

This two-song 7" and accompanying comic book are sprinkled liberally with an adorable innocence that helps mask the lack of real substance. Both songs spend a couple pop punk jumping and yelling minutes reflecting on drinking heavily and doing drugs, but nothing really happens to elicit any reaction from the listener. Yet, I can't help but feel the singer would be a real riot to have a beer with and listen to ramble. He just has that mercurial quality to his voice. The comic book, *Thank God It's Monday: The Story of World War IX,* pretty much solidifies my hypothesis. The art in the book, as well as on the 7" sleeve, has an appealing griminess similar to that of Johnny Ryan / Angry Youth Comix. However, the fairly standard story of an excitable music fan who dreams of starting a band and eventually does is not braving any new territory. If you're really into grabbing up all the creator-owned comics you can find, hop on this opportunity to pepper both your record shelves and comic box with some bright new colors. (RH)
(self-released)





Y PANTS – "Beat It Down" LP

This album is so excellent. Maybe you've heard the song they are best known for "Favorite Sweater," or that they're known to have played toy instruments, which is kind of true but kind of not true. It's more like genius creative women who can't help but make something when they hang out and the moment of creation just happened to feature toy instruments at some point. Y PANTS were a No Wave band with peers such as GLENN BRANCA, DNA, the CONTORTIONS, etc. There is a clear line from Y PANTS to PALBERTA if you need a modern reference. Some songs like the title track or "Code Of Life" barge in and bang around, shouting phrases from mundane life. "Lulu" takes on great expanses of instrumentals that are maybe gently improved and ends with whispers of compliments to one another. There are songs that are wistful ("We Have Everything") and songs that brood ("What Do You Take Me For") and a real deep cover of a LESLEY GORE hit. There is breathy poetry chanted and yelped and traded and disco beats and funky bass lines and dinging keys and calls and response. It's off-kilter and lurches and gets weird and upbeat and weird and dark. The lyrics lean towards simple wordings that can evoke an actual place or maybe just a vague feeling or a moment in action or feminism not in explicitly saying ideological opinions but instead telling stories, expressing daily realities, letting an inside joke slip. Band as feminist performance art. Total freedom. Really, what an excellent album. (MM)
(Water Wing)

Y PANTS – 12"

Listening to this record is a true state of girl-utopia in the face of death. A Hannah Hoch collage of your dream ideal, the possibilities of the eternal girl sound—maybe if the ANGELS were a Fluxus group, the horror and the pleasures of girlhood both exposed and delighted in on one transcendent record. I found out about this band in the '90s when Steve from SONIC YOUTH released a discography CD, a truly mindblowing experience for this particular teenage girl. Y PANTS were a group of art students who coagulated in the utopia that was downtown NYC in the late '70s / early '80s, where loft parties and punk rock and conceptual art collided and made dreamscapes like this possible. Using only toy instruments Y PANTS created strange surreal popscapes that fall somewhere between the RAINCOATS and JAD FAIR, with a dada quality of creating something childish seeming, but not innocent or coquettish. This is a totally assured, devastating and committed statement of intent. This is an extended 12" of one of the coolest 45s ever made, with extra tracks that have never been committed to vinyl before! Water Wing is truly putting out some of the coolest reissues imaginable so check it out, a service to the underground! Listen to "Beautiful Food" or "Off the Hook" and if that doesn't make you want to start something I don't know how to help you. (LG)
(Water Wing)

ZEITGEIST – CD

Passionate hardcore that shifts from a bleak, lethargic feeling to something darker and more pissed off over the course of the CD. At times, I sense a bit of CRUDOS influence in the riffing specifically (though this band is slower) generally alternating between standard fast hardcore and a driving gallop, with a blast here and there. The yelled vocals follow the music and get far angrier later on, are occasionally broken up by gang choruses, and the record ends with a bass-driven *In a Car*-type number. It's decent, but I think the entire first half could've been scrapped to make a much better EP. (DG)
(self-released)

ZRADA – "Западня" EP

Grunged-out hardcore from the Ukraine with clean production, rhythmic rolling hypnotic vocals D-beat styles, and super thrash metal riffs. ZRADA stay pretty safe, and not especially exciting, but all in all it's well played, with very tight rips on the kick pedal and a guitar tone that teeters at the edge of gothic and thankfully does not go too far towards epic metal. I don't speak Ukrainian, but the vocal dynamic is captivating. I'm into it, I'm just not uncomfortable enough to be thoroughly impressed. I appreciate the weird beholder-looking creature on the cover art about to eat a guy. (JR)
(Miravoice)

V/A – "Birds of A Feather Flock Together" CD

This is a compilation of (mostly) UK anarcho-punk from some well-knowns like HAGAR THE WOMB, the SYSTEM, VIRUS, ANTHRAX, and FLOWERS IN THE DUSTBIN as well as some relative newcomers like DOGSHITE, PEDAGREE SKUM and FEROXIDE. ESLEGE and SLUG offer up some beefier hardcore tracks while many of the other bands drift into post-punk and goth-like territories. As far as comps go, it's pretty fucking solid with only a few clunkers thrown in. It comes with a lyric zine that features some of the most unreadable computer layouts and font choices I've seen since the mid '90s. (GH)
(Grow Your Own)

V/A – "Columbus Blood" LP

I had the pleasure of reviewing the previous edition of this compilation and here I am again with the next volume. All of the bands are from Columbus, OH. The bulk of side A is laid back, tired dad rock that sits on the south side of "edgy". It sounds like Guitar Center had a deal on wah pedals. The only exception is ARTILLERY BREATH, who blast out some inspired and caustic black metal. Side B starts off with CADAVER DOGS, who sound like a rejected 90's MTV buzz band. The KYLE SOWASHES deliver a good, catchy indie rock song that is the brightest thing on this whole record. It closes out with a few more non-essential tracks, including a go-nowhere instrumental and a badly recorded live track from BARBED WIRE DOLLS from 1990. Meh. (GH)
(Break-Up)

V/A – "Detonate Philly Now!" EP

Four tastes of raw and brutal Philadelphia hardcore. DISJAWN own it for this reviewer, off the rails and teetering gloriously on the edge of out-of-tune the whole damn time, but fans of blown-out mania will not find a clunker in the bunch. Filthy black metalpunk from COFFINS

ACROSS HIROSHIMA, furious blasting shitpunk hardcore from POPULATION ZERO, and a double dose of bombastic blown out shit from SKITKREIG. Everything here is a "live in the studio" recording and the energy translates, fukkups and all…dark and nasty across the board. (WN)
(This Fucking City)

V/A – "Do You Wanna Be A Punk Rocker?" EP

Let's go to school, whooo! I gave this comp a rave review in the ol' column a while ago and, shocker, it's still fucking great. Six tracks from six of the best new-ish bands in the Japanese scene, ranging from noize-punk hero RECONSIDERATION to the hard-hitting well-crafted Oi! of QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS to the perfect pogo idiocy of BEER BELLY. Classmates ASUKA AND BUM SERVANTS, FIN, and PISTOL JOKE also earn As for their contributions. A+ to PISTOL JOKE for the song title "Chaotic Pants," which lives up to the billing. All of this is wrapped up in—I am not exaggerating—the best packaging any compilation EP has ever featured. It comes with an amazing booklet that features photographs of members of all the included bands as students under the tutelage of the one and only Nori (TOM & BOOT BOYS, DISCOCKS, ASUKA AND BUM SERVANTS, etc.) and a huge poster with a "class photo". It's literally the best ever, so fuckin' get it already! (AU)
(Pogo 77)

V/A – "Forbidden Fruits of Rock 'N' Roll Vol. 2" CD

This twenty-eight band comp (!) has a quote from Malcolm Tent on the inner sleeve and has the feel of a TPOS release. Including him, the only other names I know are RANCID VAT, BRODY'S MILITIA, HELLSTOMPER, SELF MADE MONSTERS, and ULTRABUNNY. While those are the standout tracks, there's bands from all over the world included, most of which are dog shit. The common theme is maybe just trashy rock'n'roll and there are some pearls buried in the feces like SVETLANAS, WVRMS, THING SLOTH, ERECTILE DEMENTIA (no really), and BARBATOS. Good for a road trip with someone you hate. (RO)
(Mystery School)

V/A – "The Glastonbury Grove Compilation" EP

Twin Peaks tribute EP that is straight outta the Twilight Zone. Read that again. Yes, this is a *Twin Peaks* tribute EP. Drugs and / or drinking were apparently involved and I am def getting a contact high from this shit. Insider infos and plotlines galore. Nowadays it is weird to see a true concept record especially by multi-artists in compilation format. It is all in that weirdo echo-y spacey garage punk / psychedelic mushroom zone that the kids are doing these days. I could appreciate it even if it was not about *Twin Peaks*. On green vinyl. (GB)
(We Used To Drink Together / What's For Breakfast?)

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Heavy Dose Records: heavydoserecords.bandcamp.com, heavydoserecords.com
Heavy Dose: heavydoserecords.bandcamp.com
Heavy Metal Vomit Party: hmvp.eu
Here and Now: hereandnowrecs.wordpress.com
Hound Gawd!: houndgawd.com
Hover Craft: hovercraftpdx.com
In The Red: intheredrecords.com
Insane Society: PO Box 18 504 01 Novy Bydzov, CZECH REPUBLIC
Joteskii Groteskii: joteskiigroteskii@hotmail.com
Kämäset Levyt: kamaset.com, Jukka Nakari, Iisakintie 18, 37560 Lempaala FINLAND
Karma Frog: 6402 Enfield Ave, Reseda, CA 91335, karmafrog.com
Kibou: kibourecords.bigcartel.com
Kink: kink-records.de
Krims Kramz: krimskramz.bandcamp.com
Little Mafia: 2605 Lost Trail Road, Edmond, OK 73012
Lumpy: spottedrace.bigcartel.com
The Magnifiers: themagnifiers.com
Mag Wheels: chromereverse.bandcamp.com
Mind Ripper Collective: mindrippercollective.bandcamp.com
Miravoice: miravoice.info
Mono Canibal: facebook.com/monocanibalrecs
Moonlee: moonleerecords.com
Mystery School: mysteryschoolrecords.bigcartel.com
Neanderthal Stench: neanderthal.stench.tumblr.com
Neck Chop: neckchoprecords.com, PO Box 5635 Fullerton, CA 92838
Nuuhkaja: haistelijat@gmail.com
Occult Whispers: occultwhispersrecords.blogspot.com
Oldschool: oldschool.pl
Phobia: phobiarecords.net
Pogo 77: Zushimachi 2951-15, Machida-shi, Tokyo, #194-020, pogo77.com
Power It Up: power-it-up.de
Radical Empathy: onepercentpress.bigcartel.com
Refuse: refusemusic.net
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Vaudevileins: vaudevileins.com
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Wooden Tooth: 416 E 7th St, Tucson, Arizona, woodentoothrecords.bandcamp.com
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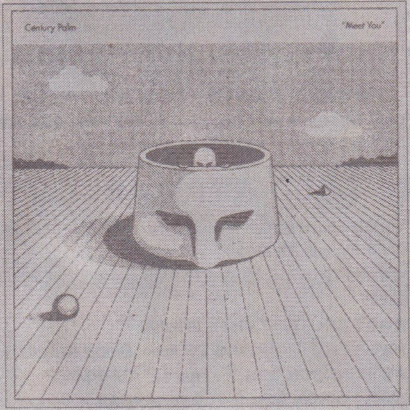

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Notches - "Change My Mind" 7" EP/TAPE

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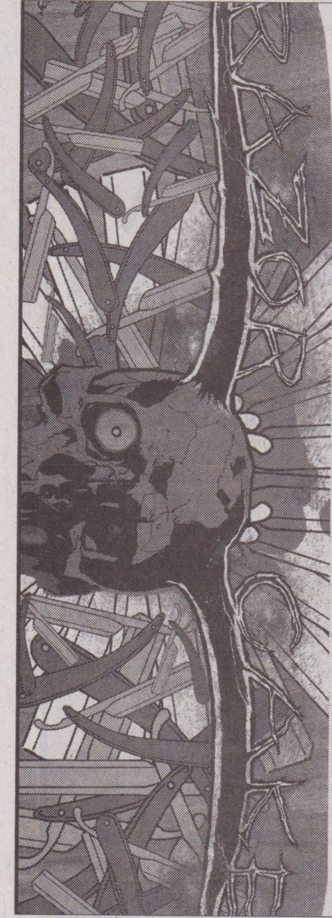

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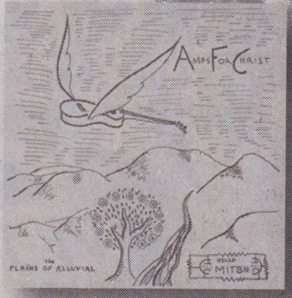

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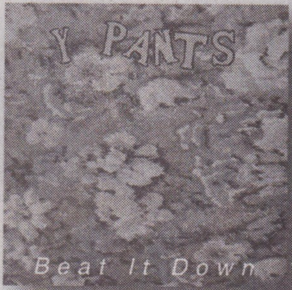

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DEMOS

All cassettes and CD-Rs are reviewed in this section. Send yours to PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146 USA and include your contact information. Submissions without artwork will not be considered.

(AU) Andrew Underwood
(BP) Ben Paulsen
(GH) Greg Harvester
(HB) Heather Blotto
(JR) Jason Ryan
(MA) Matt Badenhop
(MD) Michael de Toffoli
(SN) Sean Nieves-Quinones
(WN) Robert Collins

AGENT – *Endless Disposal* – Driving, fast, pissed hardcore punk from Kansas City. Bellowing, gnarly vocals over urgent and catchy riffs, a healthy dose of guitar leads, and rounded out with a blistering rhythm section. The more mid-tempo rockin' moments and ripping guitar solos remind of later-era POISON IDEA. The tempo change, guitar work, and vocal delivery in "DYE//Waking Death" kicked my ass! (BP) (3-song cassette, lyrics not included, agent1.bandcamp.com)

B.D. – *Demo 2016* – B.D., aka BAD DADDIES, back at it again with six songs that straddle the space between hardcore, garage, and power pop. In the more chaotic moments, Matt's guitar strangulations rocket and spiral under the guidance of the powerhouse rhythm section that is Thomas of BAUS and Tricia of IMAGE COMICS. Camylle, also of MIDNITE SNAXXX, screams and sings every word like a stab and punch to the eye of shitty men everywhere. Metal horns emoji. (SN) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, PO Box 1213, Livermore, CA 94551)

BLEEDERS – *Gash* – Vocals that are a little shrieky, a little screamy, and a little growly backed by weird post-punk compositions. Sometimes sounding influenced by the unexpected angular riffs of DELTA 5, other times referencing a more anthemic riot grrl sound, and even once in a while leveraging a bit of garage rock swagger. If someone told me this was from the '70s I would believe them. It somehow sounds like it's from before the internet. Definitely something to check out for fans of livid, feminist post-punk. (HB) (6-song tape, lyrics not included, bleeders.bandcamp.com)

BRAIN FRAGMENT – *LSD Is Good For You* – Psychedelic grindcore bass / drum freakout. Fidelity optional, drugs mandatory. Genre bending and brain melting sounds—imagine SCHLONG and PRIMUS tripping and hearing GODSTOMPER for the first time. Yeah. (WN) (10-song CD-R, lyrics not included, bigpharmarecords.bandcamp.com)

CANINE – *[kanin]* – Urgent and commanding French screamo. Lyrics are intense and personal, sounds demand attention even when they slow down and start to creep on AGAINST ME! territory (they never get there, it's just a thing in the vocals…sorry if that came off as an unintentional diss). (WN) (6-song cassette, lyrics included, busstoppress.weebly.com, c/o Cira, 50 rue Consolat, 13001 Marseille, France)

CHILDSPLAY – Vancouver dudes playing melodic punk that is described as being like CASUALTIES, but just sounds exactly like 1998 pop punk with ska parts, like FALLING SICKNESS….or LAGWAGON. (GH) (8-song CD-R, lyrics not included, childsplaylive.com)

CHILLER – Clobbering hardcore with beatdowns galore and abrupt changes that reminds me of REACT and LIFE'S BLOOD. This is extremely aggressive and I'm feeling it. Slow to mid-paced and bestial with brief scorching and slightly psychedelic solos. For a demo, this could easily be a high-quality 10". Great recording and worth finding. (JR) (8-song cassette, lyrics not included, chillerpgh.bandcamp.com)

CONTROL GROUP – *II* – You remember the first deposit from these Michigan maniacs? I do. And this one is ever better. Killer, in your face US hardcore with layers for wildass freak out guitars and a slow lurch that turns into warp speed before you fukkn know what is happening. Fierce. (WN (5-song cassette, lyrics included, controlgroup1.bandcamp.com, independentfries.com)

CRIMINAL PARTY – *La Revolution Bourgeoise* – After the opening instrumental track comes "Angry and Tired," which prominently features piano and vocals that instantly recall the NUNS. Piano and organ are a mainstay throughout the rest of the tracks, and the NUNS comparison pops up again from time to time, as well as the MUTANTS and ALLEYCATS. I realize these are high-caliber comparisons, and I think it's warranted. Much of the songwriting is that good, though the recording is pretty vulnerable and dry and most of the songs go well over three minutes. Apparently this band has existed off and on since '86, with little output. Most of the songs really stimulate the pop section of my brain and I like it a lot more than I expected to! (MA) (19-song CD-R, lyrics not included, pinkhouse@downbeat.it)

DEADBEAT CLUB – Raging cassingle from this Western Massachusetts post-punk / darkwave quartet. Snakey guitar harmonies glide and creep across the speakers, punctuated by heavy toms and skittering drum rolls. Each musician contributes vocals so that every word is a witch coven's curse. They remind me of the band T.I.T.S. from San Francisco. DEADBEAT CLUB just finished up a West Coast tour, but keep your eyes peeled for more from these folks! (SN) (3-song cassette, lyrics not included, deadbeatclub1.bandcamp.com, 830 Wolfram St., Chicago, IL 60657)

¡DESPERTAD! – *How to Deal with God?* – Fuckin' hell, this is an absolute revelation (pun kinda intended)! This two-woman wrecking crew bare-knuckle battle the Church over five tracks of blown-out hardcore that touches on D-beat, frenetic garage rock and classic Italian hardcore. There are dashes of influence from almost all of Marzia's bands, especially KONTATTO, DEATH FROM ABOVE. and HORROR VACUI. But make no mistake, ¡DESPERTAD! is a unique beast, with a raw rock'n'roll swagger (think VENOM, or more appropriately, BULLDOZER) that none of those other bands bring to the table. Spit on a crucifix, carve a pentagram into your arm and jump on the ¡DESPERTAD! war wagon. Next stop: hell! Fuck, this is just the best demo I've heard in forever. (AU) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, vex.rex@hotmail.com)

DEVIL MASTER – Philly's old school death metal band DEVIL MASTER play a bouncy blend of POSSESSED, CONFUSE and ZOUO. Clean recording with howling echoed

vocals. Punk breakdowns with haunting and weird subtle keyboard effects. Part horror movie soundtrack, part horrible refuse recordings. This is a punk rock success under the moniker of metal. (JR) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, devilmaster.bandcamp.com)

DIE ALREADY – *Bill Cosby* – Crusty blistering powerviolence that'll leave a jagged and infected grindcore wound. The full presentation is very dark and bleak and will leave you feeling helpless and dirty. Piercingly fast with the same kind of stress and adrenaline that comes from getting the wind knocked out of you and trying to suck in air, followed by crippling D-beat breakdowns for when you crumble to your knees. This is not a tape that breathes, it's a tape that is so thick and wrought with energy that you won't get a chance to inhale. The packaging features dark and unsettling images of Bill Cosby, Donald Trump, and Guy Fieri to really drive home the atmosphere they've created. I needed to take a walk after hearing this and get it off of me. Really powerful. (MD) (10-song cassette, lyrics included, diealready.bandcamp.com)

DOGS IN ETHER – *Demo* – New Oakland / San Luis Obispo band that plays that deranged pogo hardcore style. They're definitely going by the numbers here, and it works. Looking forward to the potential of their next batch of songs. (SN) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, dogsinether@gmail.com, dogsinether.bandcamp.com, 3125 Market St., Oakland, CA 94608)

ENDFORM – Neo-crust from Montréal that mixes cinematic second wave emo landscapes with blunt weighted riffs. This tape has a raw personality throughout, with dueling vocals that recall CIRCLE TAKES THE SQUARE. Very dry and human-sounding drums weather the current of rich and sonically deep melodies, all wrapped up in their own drowning output. Three songs in about fifteen minutes, so each track really gets to breathe and the whole thing naturally comes to fruition. I've had this in my tape deck for weeks and keep coming back to it. (MD) (3-song cassette, lyrics not included, endform.bandcamp.com)

FEX URBIS – I hear '80s Rough Trade and the FALL and snotty modern hepcat "damaged" vocals (that sometimes actually just sound like McPheeters…oh, the irony) and clean, meandering, reverbed college radio guitars. How do all of these things work together…? I'm still working on that myself. Because I still feel like I'm listening to a hardcore band. (WN) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, fexurbis.bandcamp.com, sewerdrips@gmail.com)

FAUX DEPART – Driving, melodic (but not quite pop punk) punk from Lyon, France. Cool, original sounding riffs and dark melodies with really catchy hooks. Lots of really creative vocal melodies. All the lyrics are in French and are about being socially awkward, feeling isolated, and TV making us feel crazy. Also comes with very cool hand-drawn artwork. (HB) (10-song tape, lyrics included, fauxdepart.noblogs.org)

FINAL VOID – *II* – Shrill, scratching hardcore with a simple delivery and especially epic guitar solos. Two tracks in three minutes that will be remixed for an upcoming LP. Make it an EP or change up the style a bit. A little repetitive, but sonically nasty and exhaustingly harsh. (JR) (2-song cassette, lyrics not included, finalvoid.bandcamp.com)

INTERLOPER – This tape is a great mix of classic New York hardcore and Scandinavian mangel. The vocals remind me very much of RORSCHACH and MIND OVER MATTER and the constant speed attack of the strings and drums remind me of ASOCIAL or ANTI-CIMEX. Go figure! Accomplished solos break up the ferocity. Really good tape. (JR) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, interloperpunk.bandcamp.com)

HUNGRY KITTEN – *Loud Bass Loud Cock* – This tape's j-card is written in crayon on folded-up notebook paper, labeled "Side Fuck (fuck to this)" and "Side You (Satisfaction Guarantee: if not horny after this tape you will be refunded)." I was thinking it was gonna be really immature shit punk, or inept baby no wave, however it seems like its painfully self-aware fake German EBM, which is fine, but not as exciting or funny to me. Recommended if you like DIESEL DUDES or ZEIGENBOCK KOPF. (SN) (9-song cassette, lyrics not included, 212 Romney Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94080)

IDAHO GREEN – *Fuck Yegen, Here's Idaho Green* – Light listening from this Brooklyn pop punk band. Recording is clean and songs are pretty drawn out and contain some prominent brass, but it ain't ska. I hear everything from REPLACEMENTS to WEEZER (yuck) to southern pop punk. (MA) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, idahogreenband@gmail.com)

INVERTS – *The Repulsion is Mutual* – Robotic and tortured sounds from Oakland. Like RUDIMENTARY PENI on 33 instead of 45. Drums are boomy and work to create loop-like dirges with the heavy guitars. Industrial music played with rock instruments at punk-song length. Good harsh grooves. (MA) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, invertsband@gmail.com)

LATCHSTRING – *Demo 2016* – Melodic, emotive '90s-inspired post-hardcore from the UK. Thin drums, clear and somewhat awkward vocals laid on top, lightly distorted open-chord guitar ring…you know the stuff. Personal / critical / poetic lyrics. Well written and played, but maybe not the most suitable recording for this band. In case you're particularly interested in '90s emotive hardcore, this is one of the better bands of the style I've heard lately. (MA) (6-song CD-R, lyrics included, latchstring.bandcamp.com)

LEVITATIONS – *Dust* – North American release of this vital Berlin post-punk band's new album. Their sound is dark with a metallic chill, but somehow the production also feels warm. Vocals right up front, and tense one-note guitar leads take front and center at times. Melodies emerge at times but never fully take hold, preventing the listener from getting too comfortable. Monotone is effectively used to convey mood. I was lucky to see these three women do their thing a few years back and it's awesome to see how they've evolved. If you dig anything in-between old coldwave and FLESH WORLD, you definitely need LEVITATIONS in your life. (MA) (9-song cassette, lyrics included, nervousintent@gmail.com)

LATE BLOOM – Damn, this shit rules and isn't what I expected at all. It's reminding me of mid '00s SF rulers like HEY GIRL, BLONDE AMBITION and LIVID… melodic and surly with an underlying sense of fucking chaos (which might be a product of the propulsive, crashing drums). Vocals are spoken and screamed with attitude for days. I can't wait to see these locals around town! (GH) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, late-bloom.bandcamp.com)

MELVIN HARKONNEN – *No Life Till Flannel* – Somber and wobbly vocal / electric guitar music from Croatia. Pretty basic three-chord punk songs sans the drums and bass with fairly out-of-tune and occasionally (drunken?) off-time vocals. Undeniably endearing and honest but maybe a bit premature. Pre-demo demo? (MA) (5-song CD-R, no lyrics, hbubic6@gmail.com)

MIDNIGHT PARASITE – Heavy hardcore that creates an interesting nexus between metal and punk. It's stripped down and blown-out, the tempos are moderate for the most part and the drumming is definitely more oriented to punk than metal. That being said, they very successfully manage to create some raw atmospheres that recall the LLN bands, and the austere songwriting makes the occasional metallic guitar riffs and flourishes much more effective than they would otherwise be. In

many ways, this is analogous to the early UK bands that started incorporating metal influences in the mid '80s, with a bit wider range of contemporary metal in the mix. There's a stomping sludge part in "Assured Destruction" that absolutely kills, like STALINGRAD beating up a BETHLEHEM riff. Killer demo. (AU) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, jackpitt@uea.ac.uk)

MISCOMINGS – *Bag Of Knives* – Punky no wave from an ex-member of SUPER SONIC PISS and friends! Caterwauling vocals, hypnotic patterns, razor blade guitar and that big floppy string sound. Reminds me of diving off the fridge onto a mattress being crowdsurfed while HIGH CASTLE was playing at the Baby Dick Banana Beach House. Tour already. (SN) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, miscomings.bandcamp.com, 4806 S Rose St., Seattle, WA 98118)

MOHAWK BARBIE – I gotta say I was a little disappointed to see that considering the band name, this band is made up of either three or four dudes, at least one shirtless. According to the liner notes the band existed from 1996 to 2002 so maybe back then it was more normal for men to appropriate feminized band names and use images like dismembered and stabbed female figures on their record covers. Either way, it should be recognized in 2017 that images of women's bodies aren't a playground for dudes to violently fantasize about their frustration with society. The band is actually pretty good; sounds like 7 SECONDS. (HB) (6-song tape, lyrics not included, dihd.net)

THE MONEY SHOT – *Hard Rock* – Bare bones nasty rock'n'roll with a Bjelland-esque snarl on the mic. Good hooks, good drinking music, plenty of bluesy grit. (WN) (12-song CD-R, lyrics included, themoneyshot.bandcamp.com)

N.E.G. – *II* – Deeply pissed straightforward D-beat from that shining star of the East Coast, Philadelphia. The completely unhinged vocals make the most immediate impact, followed by the flashy, Bones-inspired guitar flourishes. The sick, rotten bass tone impresses as well, and it's all held together by rock-solid one-two drumming that owes as much to DISORDER as DISCHARGE. Vicious lyrics (we're talking DYSTOPIA-level suicidal hatred and despair) attack the world in general and the police in particular. Love it. (AU) (4-song cassette, lyrics included, slugsaltrex.com)

NOSFERATU – *Living In The Act Of Fear* – KORO-speed vomit hardcore. The mile-a-minute rhythmic patterns are chaotic and catchy. Slows down to drop one mosh part on you, and it's worth it. (SN) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, 6118 Hylawn Drive, Austin, TX 78723)

OLDER THAN DIRT – *Discography Part 1 1990-1993* – Previously unknown to me, OLDER THAN DIRT was a hardcore band from Southampton, and this is their collected works. The first four demo tracks fall in line with the decent Euro hardcore stuff of the time. The following flexi material is distinctly more metallic thrash, but still with a seemingly political hardcore agenda. After that the style-gap widens and they craft their own blend of tight, sometimes off-kilter metallic rock. The collection rounds out with a decent sounding live recording. Not my favorite thing Boss Tuneage has reissued, but undoubtedly a necessary piece of the UKHC puzzle. (MA) (20-song CD-R, lyrics not included, bosstuneage@btinternet.com)

PEASANT – *Pain Is Near* – This is a band covering three generations of Black. Fucking. Metal. This band is a history lesson. They start with more contemporary American black metal, with calming melodies juxtaposed with undaunting major key washes of intensity, similar to AGALLOCH, recalling moments of the brutal purity of the '94 Norwegian Helvete scene. The majority of the record is more of the hard rockin', face meltin' precursor proto black metal of VENOM, but with the staple of sinister demonic 'verbed vocals to call upon the darkness. If you're interested in studying black metal in its entirety, PEASANT will give you a full generational rundown. (MD) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, peasanthtx.bandcamp.com)

PLASMA CANVAS – Hmmm…this Fort Collins, CO band seems to have more in common with alternative rock than punk, but with simpler production. The vocals remind me of *The Real Thing*-era FAITH NO MORE (first tape I ever got!), though musically it's more rockin' and groovin' stuff. I mean, it's pretty fun, but the punk influence is pretty buried. The first track even reminded me of BEASTIE BOYS' "Sure Shot." I'm gonna stop before this gets too out of hand… (MA) (14-song CD-R, lyrics not included, plasmacanvas.bandcamp.com)

POOR FORM – *Achin'* – POOR FORM is easily one of Vancouver's best bands and this is their third release of gritty, (sometimes) drunken melodic punk with confessional introspective lyrics. Every song on this release is driving and catchy as fuck. Their singer Legs still reminds me of Annie (THIS IS MY FIST / AMBITION MISSION) in the vocal department (I know they hate that, but Annie is unfuckwithable so deal with it!) and the guitars remind me of RVIVR at times. This is my favorite collection of their songs so far. Get this! (GH) (7-song cassette, lyrics included, rumbletowne.com, PO Box 663, Olympia, WA 98507)

RATS FROM A SINKING SHIP – *The Peasant's Revolt* – Highly political British rap-rock that sounds like the unlikely synthesis of two parts of the more obscure end of CHUMBAWAMBA and one part *Evil Empire*-era RAGE AGAINST THE MACINE. I can honestly say I've never heard anything like it! The lyrics are well informed and encourage taking it "to the streets." If you're even just a little bit open minded I would recommend checking this out, you might be surprised. My only gripe is that their statements regarding "the exploitation of women in the sex industry" could benefit from a little reading up on the current political organizing led by sex workers for sex workers. (HB) (12-song CD-R, lyrics not included, frass.co.uk)

REMWAR – Total ripper from Montreal. Furious straight-up hardcore delivered with a bleak and intense raw metal bent, fronted by '90s PV yowls. The components are so simple that the awesomeness of this tape kinda sneaks up on you and you're losing your shit before you know what the fukk is going on. Total winner—looking forward to more! (WN) (5-song cassette, lyrics not included, 2146 Grand Boulevard, Montreal, QC H4B 2W8 CANADA, remwar.bandcamp.com)

ROCK AND ROLL – Nonsense no wave / noise rock that is either pushing boundaries or pushing buttons, I'm not sure which. And I'm sure the band would be pleased with either result. (WN) (?-"song" cassette, lyrics not included, 20255 Prairie, Detroit, MI 48221)

SKY JUICE – *Winter Hawk: The Black Tapes 2* – Brilliantly distant solo guitar musings. Imagine the 1970s Takoma catalog reinterpreted by modern day urban mystics. The shit is out there, awesome, and totally not punk at all. Happy to have new contributions from the Fag Tapes family in my life…. (WN) (?-song cassette, lyrics not included, 20255 Prairie, Detroit, MI 48221)

SLOUCH – *Meadowfoam* – Insanely on the nose '90s grunge / alt rock worship. First song is pure *Bleach* by NIRVANA, second track is the "chill" track off the DINOSAUR JR. record. They know what they want and they're doing it; all the songs on this tape seem to tradeoff between these two styles. (SN) (7-song cassette, lyrics not included, slouchrat.bandcamp.com, $5 PPD from PO Box 273, Moncton, NB E1C 8K9, Canada)

DEMOS

SPACE ALIEN DONALD – *Must Be Funny* – SPACE ALIEN DONALD was the world's oldest gay Canadian rapper. At age 79, he passed away peacefully in his Phoenix, AZ home, the DIY space known as FUNNY WORLD. Donald was a for-real space alien, here to bring joy and wonder to our sad planet with his weird ass stories and world-building word ballads. This is not for everyone, but on the other hand, it kind of is for everyone. (SN) (13-song cassette, lyrics not included, spacealiendonald.bandcamp.com)

TIMEKILLER – *Stagnant* – Ripper solo project from an ex-pat named Garrett currently living in Vietnam. A howling, distant riff machine…VENOM is cited in the the accompanying letter, and the influence is there, though TIMEKILLER are undoubtedly hardcore. '90s East Bay discordance creeps into a few moments, but then there's a blast of Mötorpunk guitars—this is the shit that happens when there's no one else in your band to influence songwriting, and in this case it rules *hard*. (WN) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, granous@hotmail.com, timekillerpunx.bandcamp.com)

ULLATEC – *II* – Interesting doom sludge, but with blackened blast beats to pump the intensity. It's like taking an opiate and then running. You'll fell weightless, but you'll hear the sound of your struggling heart pumping to keep up with your chemically depleted state. The whole thing tears through at a thrash pace with a hardcore punk snarl pumping enough blood to pop a vessel, all up until the song "Traffic," which has the range and foresight to trudge through some good thick muck. It's a physically pulverizing experience, and if you're up to it…then godspeed. (MD) (6-song cassette, lyrics not included, ullatectexas.bandcamp.com)

THE UNKNOWN THREAT – DC hardcore from members of STUCK PIGS, NUCLEAR AGE, TROOPS OF TOMORROW, and SECRET POLICE. Seven fully intentional and expertly executed tracks from the streetpunk end of hardcore. Sounds like they go everywhere with a tight crew. Probably a good idea to get in the pit as soon as you see these guys coming cause it sounds fun as shit. (HB) (7-song tape, lyrics not included, theunknownthreat.bandcamp.com)

WÄRFEAR – Fist banging Malaysian metallic D-beat. Hints of mid '00s Sweden, but WÄRFEAR manage to plant themselves firmly in a genre while managing to avoid the sometimes unavoidable trappings of doing so. So, yeah, they are an anthemic D-beat crust assault, but they are *still* their own fucking band, and that is what makes them awesome. Only five songs here, but I would happily take an album's worth. (WN) (5-song cassette, lyrics included,No. 9392, Batu5 1/2, Simpang Bukit Lintang, 75460 Nelaka, MALAYSIA, warfear666@gmail.com)

WINSTON HYTWR – *XXXploration Date* – Dreamy, impressionistic songs with jangly guitar and lots of reverb on everything including the vocals. Maybe you are in a dream sequence in a movie when you remember dancing at a school dance with your first crush from middle school. Maybe you are stoned and taking a walk through a crowded street in Manhattan. Wherever it is your mind goes, it's hard for anyone else to really know, y'know? (HB) (9-song tape, lyrics included, winstonhightower.bandcamp.com)

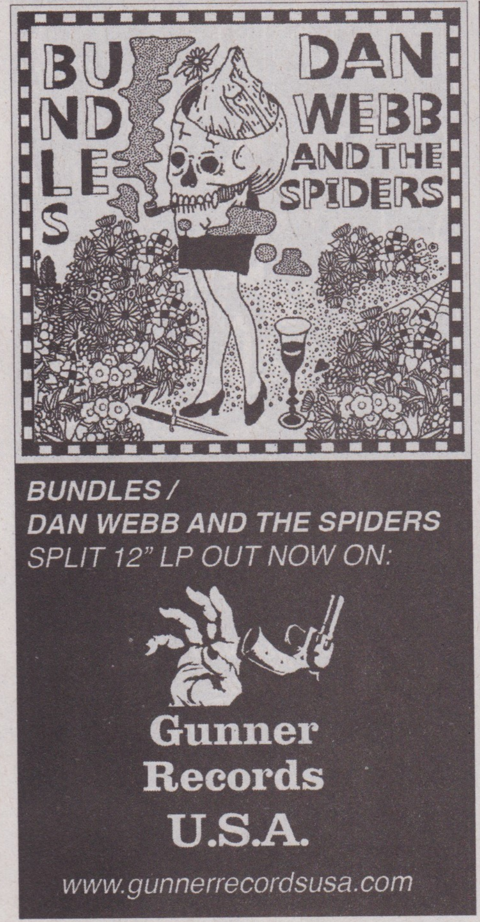
YAAWN – *The Dark Spell / Yaawn* – Two demos on one tape. Good plan. Two *good* demos on one tape. Better plan. Snotty female vocals, driving punk with a perfectly SoCal double picking and ever-present bass. The songs come and go before you even realize how much you like them, and there's a perfect early '90s irreverence that grabs me and won't let go. (WN) (14-song cassette, lyrics not included, yaawn.bandcamp.com)

YAROSTAN – *Les Ruines De Notre Temps* – Anthemic screamo with heavy doses of early '00s melodic crust. The word "epic" doesn't even scratch the surface on this one, and even though most of the subgenres touched on are considered passé by Thee DIY Elite, France's YAROSTAN drops a compelling and beautiful release worthy of attention. (WN) (4-song cassette, lyrics not included, busstoppress.bandcamp.com, yarostan.bandcamp.com)

YVONNE AND THE NO REGRETS – *Communicating Through Postal Services* – Thirteen tracks that very interestingly blend heavy riffs, off-tempo rhythms, jarring transitions, driving leads, catchy melodies, chaotic bursts and moments of drone, overlaid with fuzzed out, mesmerizing vocals. I really enjoyed the mix of more chaotic, almost no-wave type of moments with more driving, heavy stoner / psych riffs. The consistency of the droning and fuzzed out vocals act as a great way of tying together the varied elements and tempos of the music. This one is hard to pin down in a really interesting way. The lyrics are all based on old hand-written love letters. YVONNE AND THE NO REGRETS have been active for about a year and are based out of Helsinki. (BP) (13-song cassette, lyrics not included, yvonneandthenoregrets.bandcamp.com)

V/A – *D-Beat the Borders* – Crushing D-beat / raw punk comp benefitting a refugee camp in Dunkerque, France. KROMOSOM set the tone right out of the gate, and the onslaught that follows never lets up. Mostly new (to me) outfits: KAIADA, BURNCHURCH, OVERBITE, EXTINCTEXIST, KORP, GLORIOUS?, MISANTHROPIC, and a host of other intermingling with familiar heavyweights like CRIMEN, THISCLOSE, PISS, and LIFE CHAIN. Awesome in every way musically. My only complaint is that there's no information about the organization the comp is supporting. (WN) (29-song cassette, lyrics not included, dogsandvultures.com)

V/A – *Night Voices Vol. 1* – A perfect Cliff's Notes compilation for those who have missed the boat on the recent goth / deathrock revival, coupling unreleased material with standout album tracks and demo recordings to create an orgy of misanthropic gloom. Melancholy melodies, un-ironic synths, chipped black nail polish and plaintive vocals abound. Standout tracks from Russia's SIERPIEN, Australia's RULE OF THIRDS, and the Bay's own CRIMSON SCARLET, who offer up a one of the few previously unreleased tracks on the compilation. The gem of the comp is GAST's "Futuro" which joins the melody of the CURE to the drive and desperation of DISCHARGE. In a perfect universe, this is the tape that was playing on the giant boom box when all those punks got killed by vampires on the beach in *The Lost Boys*. (AU) (14-song cassette, lyrics not included, occultwhispers@hushmail.com, lostinfogdistro@gmail.com)



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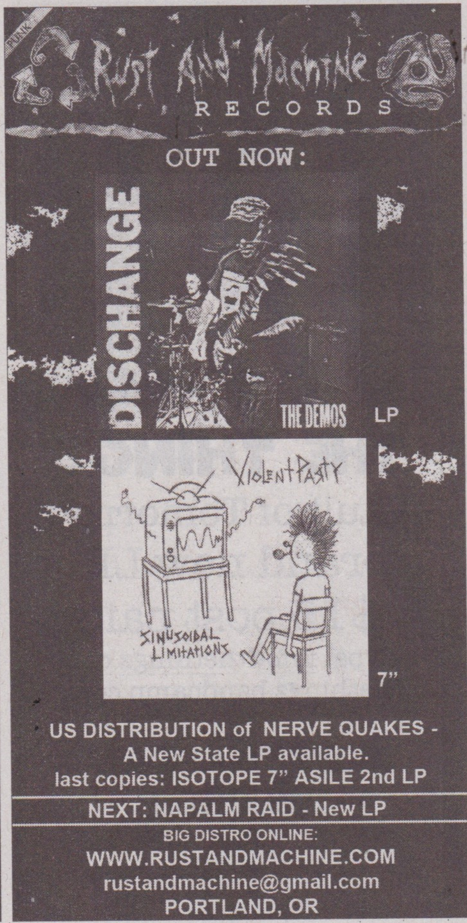

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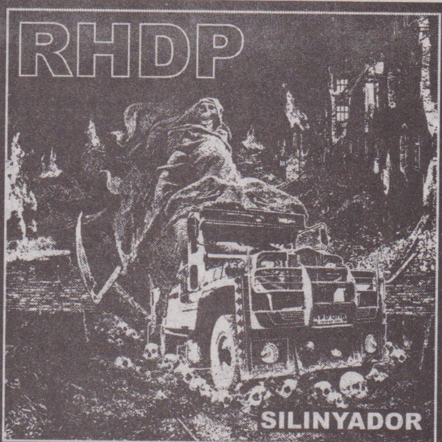

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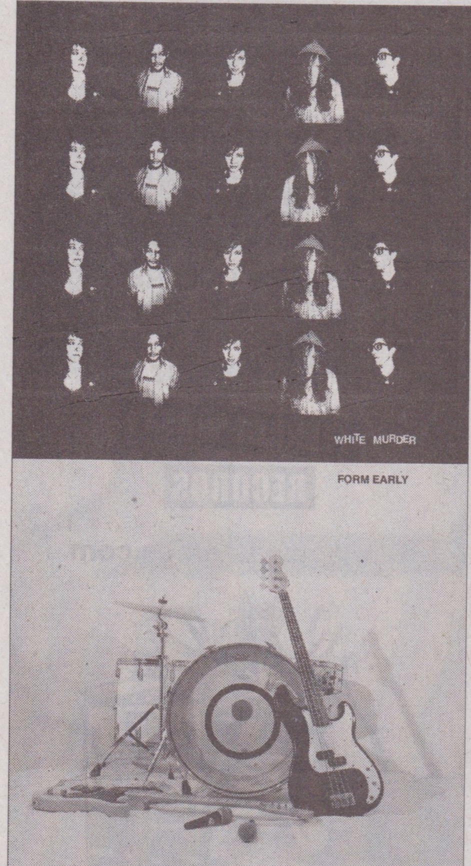

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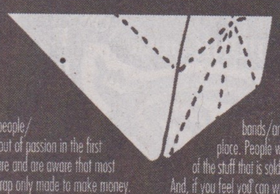

We like to meet people/ do what they do out of passion in the first underground culture and are aware that most that flag is total crap only made to make money. get in touch. To put it with Fugazi's words: bands/art/sport/etc. that place. People who believe in a of the stuff that is sold nowadays under And, if you feel you can write and relate,

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(DZ) Ryan Modee
(EC) E. Conner
(EW) Eli Wald
(JB) Julia Booz
(KS) Kenn Suto
(MM) Marissa Magic
(MR) Mikey Minicomix

BITCH, I KNOW YOU HEARD ME
$8 / 16 pgs
In the scheme of things a compilation zine about street harassment seems like something we could all get behind. *Bitch, I Know You Heard Me* is a small risographed compilation comic zine about "cat calling and unsolicited attention". It feels like the kind of thing that got made to sell at an Art Book Fair, and I suppose I mean that derogatorily. It's weird to still have that strange feeling that zines should still mean something and be directed at a specific audience of mostly poor weird idiots. Feminism and its expressions of validation are hardly innocuous or free from criticism. In the case of this zine, the issues I have with it come down to the freedom many women feel—particularly white women (not excusing myself here)—to rely on racist stereotypes when talking about the sexism they experience in real life. This is troublesome because it does have far-reaching impact on the repeated criminalization of Black men when the system attempts to protect the sexual purity of white women. It's easy to fall into these traps but important to resist the flattening of reality that leads to them. This is exactly the repeated issues that have cropped up with groups like Hollaback. I mean if you're going to make something that's sixteen pages long (that's exactly *four* actual sheets of paper) and listed online for $8-$10 maybe just do a better job of making sure it's not sooooo racist. There's lots of room and time to make something better, cheaper, and relevant to more people. Good luck! (EC)
franciseclaire@gmail.com

CANS ON A SHELF #1
$7 ppd, $10 intl / 30 pgs
This is a very high quality copied / printed photozine featuring pictures of folks riding trains, hanging out, and punk shows around the country. Like the last issue I saw (named something else) this is also a eulogy for a recently deceased friend, who is featured in these pages. The pictures tell the story of youth, joy and adventure, deep friendships and a yearning for the summer. It's really beautiful, and you don't need to know any of these people to appreciate that. (JB)
brybry@riseup.net / blackmold.storeenvy.com

DEEP FRIED #11
$1 / 21 pgs
I'm a vegan junk food nerd who appreciates critical and funny writing about pedestrian food in general, whether or not said food comes from an animal, but for the most part, this zine is just not good. It would've been cool to see this zine delve into real esoteric or regional fast food content (McRib and the fake butter wars doesn't count), or for the fast food-oriented band interviews to really be funny or revealing, but instead you get a lot of McDonald's content and generally bland writing about common fast food items. Gross stories would be cool too, but a fast food worker getting a visibly bloody finger and a customer freaking out is about as far as it goes. Worst of all, there's a re-writing of "Gin and Juice" by contributor "Lana Del Taco" where the lyrics are about fast food, with a side of fatphobia. No thanks. (DG)
2901 Yosemite Ave S, St. Louis Park, MN 55416 / videophobia222@hotmail.com

DEGENERATE DIGEST, DEC '16 / JAN '17
free with S.A.S.E. and free to prisoners / 4 pgs
While they can never be fully complete, especially somewhere like the Bay Area where there are so many things happening that are often planned with not enough notice, I always appreciate when local calendars of punk / DIY shows and community events are published, and think they may become more critical in these times of increased online surveillance. In the case of this digest, the emphasis is on events that are in Oakland and cost $10 or less. This issue was published as a double issue in the wake of the Ghost Ship fire, but stand-alone issues are both sides of an 11"x17" sheet and contain the calendar plus other written and sometimes artistic content. The December issue also contains a run-down and explanations of the measures passed in the November elections, and the reverse side has artwork by local Erin Allen. The January issue's writing focuses on Ghost Ship and its place in the Bay Area's greater housing crisis. It's effectively articulated, and the event calendar points to pertinent meetings / actions. By now, Sam has an established and pleasing aesthetic for his publications, with which this calendar-newsletter hybrid continues. (DG)
PO Box 3272, Berkeley, CA 94703 / pobox3272berkeleyca94703@gmail.com

FUCK TRUMP CLUB #1
$6 / 1 pg
Send in six bucks and in return, you'll get six monthly 11x17 newsletters denouncing your new president. I'm going back and forth incessantly on this one. On one hand, it seems pretty wasteful to sling a dollar and wait a month for someone's Donnie Trump rant to arrive in the mail, when it just repeats everything you already know and have been spouting yourself for what, by now, seems like forever. On the other hand, fuck fuck *fuck* that orange babyman, and just give somebody one fucking dollar a month six times so they can scream it, too, without it being a fucking blog. Hopefully the future issues will be more radical. (DZ)
PO Box 30272, Albuquerque, NM 87190

GENERAL SPEECH #9
$5 / 40 pgs
Exceptionally good writing about good bad music. In-depth interviews with currents Sadist and Tercer Mundo and with older bands Suburban Filth, Unwanted Christmas Presents, and Skumdribblurz. A recent after-show interview with Confuse that also includes a timeline of every step of the band's existence, down to various members quitting or interviews getting published. Write-ups of authors' favorite live recordings that include Confuse, YDI, and No Security, and lesser-knowns. The world needs more writing like "Stalking Discharge" that breaks down shit like ten songs that are potential pre-Discharge origins of the D-beat. The layouts are *MRR*-caliber in presentation, aesthetic, and creativity, and simultaneously visually match the music covered while also being relatively clean and original, without relying too much on tired visual signifiers. A lot of words are spilled, but all of it is necessary. Now that *Distort* has all but completely moved away from writing about punk music, I can count on *General Speech* to cater to that niche of my brain. (DG)
PO Box 24842, Lexington, KY 40524 / generalspeech.com

NO GODS NO MATTRESS #29
$3 / 70 pgs
I love this zine. Enola has a lot of stories of survival both mental and physical. This issue covers their introspective questions of self-worth and determination, "the comfort I feel in the eternal internal darkness," along with interspersed bursts of positivity and hope. It even has an index: death, gentrification, I'm gay, I'm goth, I cried, in PGH, I went out, lists, people I don't like, the moon, trash, and travel. I mean, that says it all, right? Each entry has multiple page numbers. I found the parts about living with disability to be especially intimate, and instructive. Coming out not too long after the Ghost Ship fire, it also includes memories of a few of the victims. I think the best parts are the stories of hitchhiking, which of course come with both the nail-biting moments of scary fuckers and the very nice people who not only give a ride, but provide support and kindness. Seventy pages full of questioning and creativity. (JB)
PO Box 3936, Berkeley, CA 94703

RAZORCAKE #96
$4 / 110 pgs
This magazine is probably familiar to many of our US readers. For those who may be unaware here or abroad it's a pretty run of the mill DIY punk rag, not unlike the one you are holding in your hands. Columns, interviews, reviews, and some attempts at conceptual music journalism fill the pages. Most DIY publications share an economy of space (born from lack of funding) pushing the pages' content to be maximized. However, *Razorcake* seems content to print with large typeface, run unedited interviews, columns that take up an entire page, and large low quality photos. Considering that they tout themselves to be punk's *only* non-profit magazine, you'd think that would make space for some challenging narratives. Indeed in the past few years they have made a concerted effort to diversify their content and contributors. This issue, being post-election / inauguration, is full of anti-Trump sloganeering. While the columns make reference to the impending horror of this presidency, many columns and comics treat this calamity with liberal clichés about the "progress of the last eight years," neglecting to note the horrors that white supremacist capitalism has waged on most of the world for the past 500+ years, up to and including the last eight. Perhaps the most well-written piece in this issue is a kind of memoir of one punk guy's relationship with rap music throughout his life. I'm confused though why a DIY punk magazine feels like it can justify dedicating so much space to corporate music. I'm not suggesting hip-hop isn't relevant to our communities, but it's kinda weird to dedicate so much space in this particular magazine (literally a whole page about Kanye West) to millionaires. I think it's important to support other DIY publications that share similar goals and I don't want to undervalue the effort and time it takes to put something like this out. I just think we can always do better. (EC)
PO Box 42129, Los Angeles, CA 90042 / razorcake.com

THE TROUBLE WITH NORMAL #144 / #145
$3.25 ppd / 64 pgs
Missouri's favorite and possibly longest running punk fanzine. It consistently refers to the editorial staff as "we" even though I'm pretty sure it's just one guy doing the whole thing! Always happy to review the hyper local *TTWN*! This issue is jam packed with interviews, reviews, political rants, photos, and more. The layout is computer based and a little pixilated but hey, at this point that has its own lo-fi charm. This issue highlights bands from the often skipped over musical outposts of Sacramento (Dog Party) and Kansas City (Nature Boys). These "people" seemingly go to every show in Missouri and there are loads of cool show reviews (my favorite). Of course any punk magazine worth a shit should release a post election issue full of foreboding and hopeful thoughts. Let's all just hope we can make it to issue #146. (EC)
PO Box 1444, Columbia, MO 65205

TRUST #181
66 pgs
I'm sure the editors of *Trust* are sick and tired of being called the German version of this very mag you are now holding, so this time I won't do it. *Trust* is a German language black and white photo-heavy (but not too heavy) punk music zine with a huge columns sections and tons of reviews of punk music, books and zines (English print is reviewed in English!) that has been pounding pavement since 1986. The layout is pretty cool, the photos are pretty badass, and the ads are pretty abundant. If you're a punk that speaks Deutsch, this is an absolute must subscribe. If you are a one language punk like my stupid American ass, it's totally worth it to pick up a copy, check out what bands they review or interview, and check out all the ads online for English versions. It's pretty dope. (DZ)
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PILIPINO PUNKS: seeking submissions and interviews for a special PINOY PUNK issue of *MRR*!

We're interested in hearing about bands, scene reports, record labels, booking collectives, venues, artists, writers, booking collectives, organizations, histories of the Philippines, etc!

Seeking all Pinoy Punks, in the Philippines to the worldwide diaspora, to contribute!

If you are interested, please e-mail mrr@maximumrocknroll.com with subject line "PINOY PUNK x MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL x"
Deadline: April 1st, 2017

PILIPINO Punks: naghahanap kame ng mga interview at iba pang mga sulat para sa isang PINOY PUNK isyu ng *MRR*!

Interesado kame sa mga scene reports, interview sa mga banda, record label, collectives, venues, mga manunulat, mga artists, samahan at kasasayan ng Pilipino punk sa Pilipinas at ibang bansa!

Lahat ng Pinoy punk sa buong mundo ay puwede mag submit!

Paki email ang mrr@maximumrocknroll.com na ang subject line ay "PINOY PUNK x MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL x"
Deadline: April 1st 2017